the SOCIAL PLANNING and RESEARCH COUNCIL
of Hamilton and District

155 JAMES STREET SOUTH, 6TH FLOOR HAMILTON, ONTARIO L8P 3A4 TELEPHONE 522-1148

AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS IN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

Caroline Ball, M.H.K.,
Research Associate

Angela Houser,
Research Assistant

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OF HAMILTON AND DISTRICT

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Hamilton, Ontario. L8P 3A4

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus of this research was to assess the impact of employment training programs on social assistance recipients in Hamilton-Wentworth and to examine gaps in services which currently exist within the employment training referral system.

As a means for identifying which factors may impact upon the social assistance client before, during and after involvement in employment training, three separate analyses were carried out in addition to a qualitative survey of key informants working within the referral system. These analyses included a before/after survey of training participants, a point-in-time survey of social assistance recipients who have left training programs, and a series of interviews with key decision-makers involved in the delivery of programs throughout the region.

The first research objective was to ascertain which variables were the most characteristic determinants of clients' program involvement in and completion of a program. Frequency of learning opportunities, number of others in the learning environment, age of others in the class, and need for achievement were all determined to be significant predictors of involvement. The completion of a program was best predicted by the length of time spent in a program, as well as total number of employment barriers, and the amount of time since the client last worked.

The second objective of the research was to identify the effects of the completion of an employment training program on an individual's quality of life and employment possibilities. In terms of work status, generally, social assistance clients who complete programs are more likely to find work following involvement than their non-trained counterparts. Other program effects relate to self-confidence, improved life skills and better personal coping mechanisms.

The third research objective focused on the reasons why trainees apply for or return to social assistance after leaving an employment training program. Statistical generation of a predictive model indicated that the variables most closely associated with a return to social assistance were: type of critical life incident experienced following a program; involvement in a program; marital status, and whether or not the client had participated in another program since leaving their most recent program. By far, the single best determinant of return to social assistance was whether the client had experienced a negative critical life incident, e.g., sickness, injury, loss of income, etc., since beginning or leaving a training program..

The final objective focused on the identification of gaps in services currently existing within the Hamilton-Wentworth training referral system. Key informants expressed the need for a more centralized system of client coordination and placement; a system of "quick reference" information retrieval for workers who counsel social assistance clients; a training assessment counsellor who would be involved at the Income Maintenance Division of Regional Social Services; and, better channels of communication between formal levels of education and employment training bodies in order to enhance the transition of secondary level students into the work force.

The findings of the study have relevance and applicability to a number of "actors" within the employment training system in the Region, including the Income Maintenance Division of Regional Social Services, Canada Employment Centres, numerous training programs, Mohawk College and school boards.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1.a) WORKERS INVOLVED IN ASSESSING CLIENT/PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY SHOULD PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON MATCHING THE EXPECTATIONS OF CLIENTS WITH APPROPRIATE PROGRAM CONTENT AND STRUCTURE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

   i) PREFERRED FREQUENCY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE,
   ii) CLASS SIZE,
   iii) AGE OF PROGRAM COHORTS.

AND,

b) INTAKE AND PROGRAM COUNSELLING STAFF SHOULD PLACE ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS ON CLIENT-PROGRAM MATCHING VIS-A-VIS THESE PERSONAL SITUATIONAL VARIABLES:

   i) AGE OF THE TRAINEE,
   ii) LENGTH OF TIME ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE
   iii) NEGATIVE CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENTS PRIOR TO PROGRAM APPLICATION.

2. a) GREATER CONSIDERATION AND EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ESTABLISHING PROGRAM LENGTHS WHICH ARE MORE CONDUCIVE TO TRAINEE RETENTION;

AND,

b) PROGRAM AND REFERRAL-BASED MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING MORE COMPLETE CLIENT MONITORING PROCEDURES THROUGHOUT A CLIENT'S INVOLVEMENT AND, PERHAPS, FOR A PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS/HER PROGRAM COMPLETION.

3. INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN DIRECTING CLIENTS TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS SHOULD HAVE BETTER AND MORE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO INFORMATION REGARDING TRAINING PROGRAMS ACROSS THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH.

4.a) INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE CREATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT OF TRAINING PROGRAMS WITHIN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH SHOULD STRIVE TO PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON MEETING THE TRAINING NEEDS OF THE LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED.

AND,

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

4.b) IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED, INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN PROGRAM FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT SHOULD STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT MATCH BETWEEN TRAINING PROGRAM STRUCTURE/CONTENT AND CURRENT LABOUR MARKET DEMAND TRENDS AS A MEANS OF BETTER PREPARING THE TRAINEE FOR ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE.

5. IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS, WITHIN VARIOUS PROGRAMS, MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING AND MONITORING JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES FOR CLIENTS WHICH REFLECT CURRENT EMPLOYMENT MARKET TRENDS.

6.a) IN THE FUTURE, CONTINUED EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON MEETING THE APPROPRIATE SKILL NEEDS OF CLIENTS AS THEY RELATE TO VARIOUS AREAS OF THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE AND GENERAL WELL-BEING.

AND,

b) TO ASSIST SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS IN THEIR MOVEMENT TOWARD A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE, VIA SKILLS TRAINING, GOVERNMENTS, SHOULD ENSURE ADEQUATE INCENTIVE MECHANISMS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION IN THE FORM OF:

- FINANCIAL SUBSIDY (i.e., TRAINING ALLOWANCES)
- ADEQUATE AND SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE
- ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCES.

7. FUTURE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN, AT ALL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING REFERRAL AND DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS OF PROSPECTIVE TRAINEES PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO OVERCOMING "DEPENDENT-BASED" BARRIERS.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

8.a) IT IS CONTINGENT UPON PLANNERS WORKING WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING REFERRALS IN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH, TO CONTINUE WITH SUPPORT FOR THE PROMOTION OF LIFE SKILLS, BASIC EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EMPLOYMENT SEARCH STRATEGIES WITHIN PROGRAMS;

AND,

b) WHERE APPROPRIATE, WORKERS AND COUNSELLORS WHO REFER CLIENTS TO EMPLOYMENT TRAINING SHOULD STRIVE TO INCORPORATE BOTH JOB-RELATED AND LIFE-RELATED SKILLS IN THEIR CLIENTS' RESPECTIVE TRAINING PLANS.

9. MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON FOLLOW-UP AND ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEES AFTER LEAVING AN EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE TRANSITION FROM PROGRAM TO WORKFORCE OR IN REDIRECTING AND ASSISTING THE TRAINEE TOWARDS HIS OR HER NEXT APPROPRIATE TRAINING EXPERIENCE.

10. FUNDING AND COORDINATING BODIES INVOLVED WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING NETWORK OF PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH SHOULD PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON ASSISTING TRAINEES IN COPING WITH CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENTS IMPEDING THE TRANSITION OF THE INDIVIDUAL FROM THE TRAINING EXPERIENCE TO AN EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE.

11.a) A STRENGTHENED SYSTEM OF COORDINATION AND PLACEMENT OF CLIENTS, PARTICULARLY SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BY THOSE AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF THESE SERVICES.

AND,

b) EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON BRINGING KEY REFERRAL SYSTEM ACTORS (E.G., SOCIAL SERVICES, C.E.C.'S, PROGRAMS) TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH A WORKING MODEL FOR THIS DELIVERY.

AND,

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

11.c) IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL POLICIES REGARDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRACTICES, MORE COMMUNITY CITIZENS, PARTICULARLY TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DISCUSSION ABOUT INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES WITHIN THE REGION.

12.a) A COMPREHENSIVE REFERENCE OR INDEX SYSTEM OF PROGRAM AND REFERRAL INFORMATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED BY A SPECIFIC GROUP OR AGENCY FROM WITHIN THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH;

AND,

b) A SPECIFIC TRAINING ASSESSMENT COUNSELLOR SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE REGIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES INCOME MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT TO ASSIST SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN BETTER FACILITATING TRAINING CHOICES FOR CLIENTS AND TO SERVE AS A COMMUNITY LIAISON WITH OTHER EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PLANNING GROUPS WITHIN THE REGION.

13. MORE AND BETTER CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT TRAINING BODIES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AS A MEANS OF PLANNING BETTER STRATEGIES FOR SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS ANTICIPATING A MORE IMMEDIATE TRANSITION INTO THE WORK FORCE FOLLOWING COMPLETION.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks are extended to all trainees and social assistance recipients who agreed to participate in this study, especially to those who requested the time to meet with staff personally and discuss their concerns.

Thanks are also directed to the staff and administrators of the following programs: Futures, Ontario Basic Skills, Women in Trades and Technology, Basic Job Readiness Training, Focus on Skills, and the Employment Services Unit of the Regional Social Services Department.

Much appreciation is also extended to the staff of the following employment referral departments and agencies: Citizen Action Group/Youth Employment Centre, Hamilton Help Centre and Canada Employment Centres in Hamilton-Wentworth. In addition, we would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Income Maintenance Division of the Regional Social Services Department, in providing essential information needed to establish the validity of this research.

A final note of appreciation goes to all members of the Social Planning and Research Council Research Advisory and Community Development Advisory Committees and staff who involved themselves, at some point in time, in the creation of this document. In particular, many thanks are extended to the support staff, for their consistent high quality work under considerably limited conditions.

GLOSSARY OF STUDY TERMS

Bias in Sampling - Samples that do not accurately represent the population from which they are drawn. For example, selecting a sample from a larger population on the bias of a characteristic or variable which is not normally seen in the population. In this study, comparisons are drawn to determine if there are biases between those who responded and those who did not from the general social assistance population. (Bradley and McClelland, 1978).

Bimodal Sample Distribution - A large sample distribution of two very frequent scores; scores of two unlike groups have been combined in a single distribution, e.g., minimum wage earners and highly trained professionals currently make up a rather large bimodal distribution of workers within Hamilton-Wentworth.

Chi-Square (x^2) - A statistical analysis used primarily to determine whether a set of events has occurred as predicted from some hypothesis. Data describing these events are collected into categories and the frequencies within these categories are then compared with expected frequencies. (Bradley and McClelland, 1978)

Client Impacts - Changes measured or perceived in the quality of life or general well-being of an individual.

Cohort - A study which focuses on the same specific population (e.g., social assistance recipients) each time data are collected, although the samples studied may be different. In this study, program trainees from around Hamilton-Wentworth were sampled at one point in time and the same group was sampled again, a few months later. (Babbie, 1973)

Critical Life Incidents - Life events, either positive or negative, which may or may not occur without notice and have a critical impact on the quality of life or well-being of an individual. For example, a positive life incident might be an invitation to marriage; a negative life incident might be the death of a spouse.

In-Program Versus Post-Program Study - In-program refers, in this study, to an examination of trainees while they are still in a specific training program such as Futures or Basic Job Readiness Training. Post-program refers to examining the condition of these same trainees at some point after leaving a program, regardless of whether they completed the program.

Key Informants - Persons who are familiar or knowledgeable with an issue; in some cases, experts in a given area. In this study, key informants comprise program and referral managers, training consultants, teachers, counsellors, social workers, etc.

Level of Significance - Three levels of significance are most often used in survey research: .05, .01, and .001. These mean, respectively, that the chances of obtaining a measured association between two or more variables resulting from chance are 5/100, 1/100 and 1/1000. When the results of a study are said to be significant, it does not mean the results are important. Rather, it means the results did not occur by chance.

Multiple Regression Analysis - A statistical analysis developed for situations in which several interrelated variables are examined simultaneously. Simply stated, a linear model that relates a dependent variable to a set of independent variables is formulated. For example, a trainee's current income may be expressed as a function of years of education, work experience, job classification and other related attributes.

Social Assistance Recipients - In this study, social assistance recipients were considered to include those individuals on either General Welfare Assistance or Family Benefits Allowance.

Training Programs - For the purposes of this study, the following employment-related skills programs were included: Futures, Ontario Basic Skills, Women in Trades and Technologies, Basic Job Readiness Training and Focus on Skills.

T-Test - A statistical procedure to test the hypothesis that no significant difference exists between the means or average scores of two groups on a specific variable. For example, a t-test can be used to determine if there are significant differences between males and females on scores for a reading achievement test.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In November 1986, the Social Planning and Research Council was approached by the Social Services Department of the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, to carry out an investigation of employment training programs regarding their effectiveness in assisting social assistance recipients to either enter or re-enter the workforce.

In February 1987, work began on a study aimed at examining the impact of employment training programs on social assistance recipients (i.e., General Welfare or Family Benefits claimants) in the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth. Research would thus focus on both a client and system-based assessment of training. It was proposed that results culminating from such a study would be useful in future planning by the Social Services Department, in order to provide for better and maximized access to training programs by its clients.

In defining specific research objectives, a conceptual flow model was developed as a means of identifying key environmental factors which may impact upon the social assistance client before, during and after an employment training experience (refer to Figure 1). Within this framework, three levels of impact analysis are distinguished.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the first level of analysis concentrates on pre-program client-based entry characteristics such as quality of life, general well-being, perceived employment barriers, feelings about work, etc.. With the introduction of program-based variables, the second level of analysis, an initial appraisal of in-program client status, is undertaken. Upon leaving their respective programs, after either completing or dropping out, the post-program experiences of the client need to be measured. The third level of impact analysis takes into account changes in client-based variables, both personal and environmental, focusing on the direction taken by clients after their program participation. For example, are they working, in another program, or have they applied for or returned to social assistance?

Across all levels of this conceptual model, situational and environmental factors, which often are beyond the client's control, are introduced. These

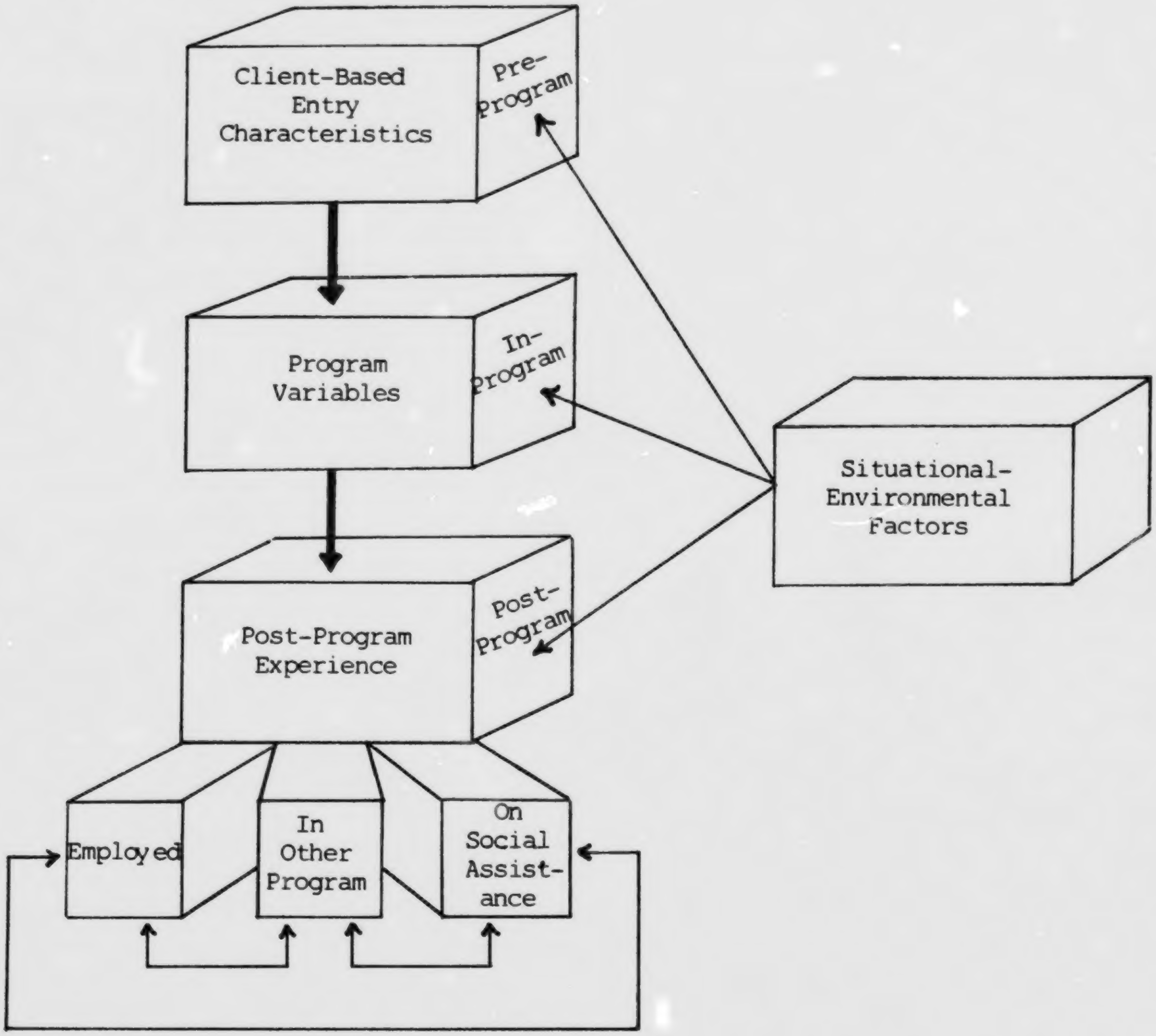
Client-Based Entry Characteristics
Pre-Program
Program Variables
In-Program
Post-Program Experience
Post-Program
Situational-Environmental Factors
Employed
In Other Program
On Social Assistance

Figure 1

CLIENT-PROGRAM IMPACT ASSESSMENT MODEL

external factors may or may not act as 'modifiers' to a given client-program scenario. It is the intent of this research to control, as much as possible, for these variables as a means of better defining impacts on clients.

On the basis of the conceptual framework, a number of research objectives, in the form of questions can be formulated:

1. Which variables are the most characteristic or predictive determinants of clients' participation in a training program and their subsequent completion?
2. What client-based impacts are most immediately measurable following program participation, in terms of quality of life and ability to overcome employment barriers?
3. Why do trainees apply for or return to social assistance after leaving an employment training program?
4. What gaps in services currently exist in the larger training referral system, as identified by those who work within its structure?

The remainder of this study is devoted to finding answers to these questions, as well as recommendations for the future planning and development of training programs, relative to social assistance clients, across the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Employment and Training

Recent reviews carried out on contemporary literature pertaining to the impacts of unemployment suggest that little is currently known about its effects other than to describe it as an 'economic phenomenon'[1]. Indeed, much of this research has focused on economic statistics; for example, estimating the total number of jobless for a given region, or determining the costs associated with the maintenance of unemployment insurance programs.

A number of researchers (e.g., Feather, 1982; Gurvey and Taylor, 1981; Jaloda, 1981; and, Patton and Noller, 1984)[2] agree there is a need to examine the 'non-economic' effects of unemployment, such as quality of life and mental well-being, or the effects of certain program interventions on the employability of the individual.

Research relating specifically to employment training program impacts on the unemployed client is very limited in scope, directing much attention to program evaluation vis-a-vis output measures (e.g., Bassi, 1983; Hudgirs, 1986; Mead, 1985; and Robinson, et al, 1985). One conclusion which can be consistently drawn from these studies is that there is a continuing need for "... an investment in education and training and in the provision of supportive services, e.g., day care and transportation"[3].

In examining program-client impact in terms of the present study, and further understanding why certain social assistance recipients return to benefits after leaving a program, Fischer (1986) provides a comprehensive review of measures which deal with "problems of premature termination" and program clients. For example, a number of studies have demonstrated that continuance

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1 City of Calgary, Research and Planning Unit (1986), The Effects of Youth Unemployment in Calgary, Calgary: author.

2 Ibid, p.21.

3 D.C. Hudgins (1986), Study Links Training and Reduced Dependence, Public Welfare. 18-22.

(in a program) can be increased, and/or positive outcomes enhanced, when the initial intake activities or contacts with a client focus on structuring the mutual expectations of the client and the case worker (e.g., Hoehn-Saric, et al, 1964; Baum and Felzer, 1964; Truax and Carkhoff, 1965; Perlman, 1968; Sloane, et al, 1970; Doster, 1972; and Curran, 1974)[4].

2. Criteria for Assessing Program-Client Impact

Hedrick, Oros, and Schmutte (1981) note that the best measure of an employment training program's success is whether or not it has had an impact on its participants' work lives and earnings. Thus,

> At some interval after program referral one wants to know if youth (clients) are employed, securing additional education, obtaining skills training, or unemployed and doing nothing.[5]

This study also suggests that, while earned income through employment procurement may be the 'ultimate' criterion for assessing program effectiveness, obtaining ratings of client satisfaction and perception of services is also an assessment component worthy of consideration (Hedrick, et al, 1981).

Rossi and Wright (1977) view impact analysis as assessing the impact of a given program in terms of a specified set of desirable outcomes. Thus, issues in any analysis should include:

> ... how can policy goals be defined; what are the most appropriate design, measurement devices, and analyses to be employed, given the limitations imposed by the sponsor and budget; and what are the appropriate audiences for the findings?[6]

[4] J. Fischer (1986), Effective Casework Practice: An Eclectic Approach. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 140-141.

[5] T.E. Hedrick, C.J. Oros and G.T. Schmutte (1981), Two CETA Youth Employment Programs: Evaluation in a Local Setting. Evaluation Review. 5, 6, 723-744.

[6] P.H. Rossi and S.R. Wright (1977), Evaluation Research: An Assessment of Theory, Practice and Politics. Evaluation Quarterly. 1, i, 5-51.

Cook and Campbell (1975) state that the ideal model for measuring the effectiveness of a public policy or program is through a randomized and controlled experiment; that is, where respondents are selected at random, and the researcher controls the treatments placed on a given group, e.g., type of program, age, sex, etc. However, it is often the case that actual impact studies depart from this model in one or more ways. The 'quasi-experimental' approach usually involves use of a control group constructed in a non-random procedure, or controlling statistically for competing explanations by using cross-sectional groups and multivariate analyses[7].

In comparable studies where no attempt was made to identify a control group, Blau and Duncan (1977) in one study and Sewell and Hauser (1975) in another noted:

> ... in a study of long term income effects of educational experience, adults of varying amounts of educational attainment were compared with respect to their present occupational attainments and incomes, statistically holding constant their present occupational and income attainments.[8]

Thus, multivariate statistical models applied to such data hold competing factors constant and yield estimates of the net effects of educational attainment. The value of this type of analysis depends on whether or not all significant competing factors have been entered into equations. This could include, for example, socio-economic family background, sex, place of residence, etc. In the remainder of this study, through analysis and discussion, these effects will be determined.

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[7] P.H. Rossi and S.R. Wright (1977), Evaluation Research: An Assessment of Theory, Practice and Politics, Evaluation Quarterly, p.8.

[8] Ibid, p.9

3.0 METHODOLOGY

A. CLIENT-BASED MEASURES

In examining the impact of training programs on social assistance recipients and their reasons for returning to Income Maintenance caseloads post-program, two separate client-based measures were carried out.

1. Cohort (In-Program) Questionnaire

This research component was designed to assess the impact of job training programs on clients, as expressed in a in-program/post-program comparison.

A self-written questionnaire was developed to measure the following areas: quality of life situation, perceived barriers to employment, need for achievement, program expectations and preferred learning environment.

Initial administration of the Cohort (In-Program) form began in January 1988, while intended study participants were still in programs. Seven broad-ranging training programs were included as sources of clients for the study, as identified through meetings with Regional Social Services staff. These included: Futures (Youth Employment Centre), Futures (Mohawk College), Women in Trades and Technology, Basic Job Readiness Training, Focus on Skills, Ontario Basic Skills, and the Work Activity Project (Employment Services Unit -Income Maintenance).

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed by program staff in a classroom setting, to voluntary participants across all programs. Respondents were requested to complete and return the form either directly to program staff, or by business reply mail, depending on time constraints present within a given classroom setting. Table 3.1 indicates the number of respondents by program who returned a total of 164 questionnaires*.

TABLE 3.1: COHORT (IN-PROGRAM) SAMPLE

Program	Frequency	%
Futures (Y.E.C. and Mohawk)	65	39.9
Focus on Skills	28	17.2
Basic Job Readiness Training	27	16.6
Ontario Basic Skills	25	15.3
Women in Trades and Technology	6	3.7
Other (e.g., Work Activity Project)	12	7.4
Total	163	100.0

* Note: One respondent did not specify name of program

2. Cohort (Follow-Up) Questionnaire

In July 1988, a total of 164 follow-up questionnaires with business reply envelopes were mailed directly to respondents of the Cohort (In-program) Questionnaire. A reminder letter was also mailed out 3 weeks later. Areas measured included: changes in quality of life indicators, changes in perceived barriers to employment, post-program level of satisfaction and changes in preferred learning environment.

Fifty-seven respondents* completed the Cohort (Follow-up) Questionnaire. Table 3.2 illustrates the distribution of respondents by program.

TABLE 3.2: COHORT (FOLLOW-UP) SAMPLE

Program	Frequency	%
Futures	18	32.7
Focus on Skills	11	20.0
Ontario Basic Skills	10	18.2
Basic Job Readiness Training	7	12.7
Women in Trades and Technology	5	9.1
Other	4	7.3
Total	55	100.0

* Note: Two respondents did not specify name of program

3. Point-In-Time Questionnaire

The purpose of this study component was to determine why clients who were previously registered in an employment training program in Hamilton-Wentworth had returned to the Income Maintenance caseloads within a few months after leaving or completing the program.

A self-written questionnaire was designed to examine the following variables: quality of life situation, importance of work, work history, barriers to employment, client/program expectations and satisfaction with the training program. The anonymous questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of 600 social assistance recipients on the Income Maintenance caseload during August 1988.

Six hundred potential respondents and their corresponding addresses were randomly selected from computer-based data files at the Income Maintenance Department. All questionnaires were mailed through the Regional Social Services Department using Social Planning and Research Council envelopes. A business reply envelope was also included with each package. As this administration was completely anonymous, a follow-up letter was not possible.

A total of 112/600 (18.7%) social assistance clients responded to the questionnaire. Due to anonymity factors, it was not possible to follow-up on additional respondents for this sample. Of these, 32 (28.8%) had been involved in an employment training program over the past year (1988). Table 3.3 indicates the number of respondents involved in training by program area.

TABLE 3.3: POINT-IN-TIME SAMPLE

Program	Frequency	%
Basic Job Readiness	13	40.6
Futures	5	15.6
Ontario Basic Skills	4	12.5
Focus on Skills	3	9.4
Women in Trades and Technology	1	3.1
Other (e.g., Work Activity Project)	6	18.7
Total	32	100.0

4. Non-Response Bias Test

A sample of 29 case files from Regional Social Services staff was used in a statistical non-response bias test to compare the "goodness of fit" of respondents to non-respondents. This sample reflects a ten percent comparison of the total sample derived from returned Cohort (In-Program) and Point-In-Time Questionnaires (n=276).*

S.P.R.C. staff constructed a short list of variables similar to all client-based measures in the study to determine if there were significant differences between respondents and non-respondents. In September 1988, researchers examined de-activated Income Maintenance case files comprising a sample of 29 non-respondents, considered current for comparison with the 112 respondents to the Point-In-Time questionnaire. In this sense, direct comparisons could be made between non-respondents and respondents as both groups had social assistance, i.e., General Welfare or Family Benefits as their source of income.

Age and number of dependents had significantly different means between the respondent and non-respondent groups at the p=.02 level. Examination of standard deviations suggested that clients were more likely to respond if they were older (i.e., over 25) and had at least one dependent. While this implies a bias in the selection of respondents, comparison of the sample characteristics with actual training program participant rolls suggests a proportional similarity to the population.

B. SYSTEM BASED MEASURES

1. Key Informant Interview Schedule

This analysis was designed to examine and compare different components of the employment training referral system from a structural and client-match perspective. A random, but "expert" sample of 30 program managers, counsellors, social service workers, and instructors from around Hamilton-Wentworth were given face-to-face interviews at their places of work during the months of June to September 1988. A representative sample was derived from the following referral system areas: Regional Social Services, selected training programs, Canada Employment Centres, and other employment referral agencies (e.g., Employment Services, Youth Employment Centre).

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* A complete discussion of findings and corresponding tables is presented in Appendix D.

Table 3.4 provides a summary of informants by position within the referral system structure.

TABLE 3.4: KEY INFORMANT SAMPLE

Job Title	Frequency	%
Counsellors (Program & Employment)	12	40.0
Regional Social Service Workers	8	26.6
Managers	5	16.7
Curricular Consultants/Instructors	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Areas to be investigated included: position of informant, knowledge of training programs, knowledge of social assistance clients, understanding the client/program match, use of assessment criteria, barriers to employment, and program/system effectiveness.

4.0 RESPONSE SUMMARY - HIGHLIGHTS

1. Cohort (In-Program) Questionnaire

a) Profile of Sample

Age

- 164 males and females responded to the questionnaire.
- mean age for the sample was 28.0 years, median was 25.0 years, and greatest frequency of age occurring was 19.0 years.
- largest sub-group to respond ranged between 25 - 34 years of age.

Highest Level of Education

- the majority of respondents, 99 (61.9%), had at least some secondary (grades 9 - 13) level of education.
- only 24 (15.0%) had taken courses at the post-secondary level.

Sex

- 100 (61.0%) females and 64 (39.0%) males comprised the Cohort (In-Program) sample.

Employment

- 145 (88.4%) program clients had not worked at all one week prior to beginning an employment training program.
- 70 (43.8%) were actively looking for work while in a program.

Income

- 69 (42.9%) of program participants had been on Social Assistance immediately prior to beginning a program.
- of 48 respondents indicating length of time on social assistance, 30 (62.5%) had been on assistance for more than one year. Only 2 (4.2%) had been receiving benefits for less than two months.
- of 94 (57.1%) respondents not on social assistance, only 19 (11.8%) had been employed either full or part-time.

b) Barriers to Employment

- 98 (61.6%) of all respondents had experienced a critical life incident, e.g., loss of a job, acute illness, marital problems, etc. within a six month period immediately prior to completing the questionnaire.
- the area of most noted affect was 'education', with 31 (31.64%) of 98 respondents having a positive experience.
- the area experiencing most negative affects was 'acute family-related crisis', with a total of 15 (15.31%) respondents.

c) Need for Achievement Scale

- of 141 respondents, only 25 (17.0%) scored below the midpoint, indicating a lower overall score on the need for achievement measure.
- 116 (83.0%) respondents scored above the midpoint.
- the mode (n=28) for the sample was a score of 16.0 of a possible of 24.0 weighted value.

d) Preferred Learning Environment

- 85 (53.1%) respondents preferred classes held five days per week.
- 103 (64.4%) stated that the number of people in the learning situation should be less than or equal to ten. For most programs, the average number of classroom participants can range between 10 - 25 trainees, depending on the program.
- the majority, or 98 (61.25%), of respondents did not specify a preferred age for fellow participants. Fifty-one (31.9%) did prefer that cohorts be of the same age as themselves.

e) Client/Program Expectations

- of 160 program participants, 112 (70.0%) had been recently counselled regarding individual employment strategies. Seventy-seven (68.8%) of these clients received advice and direction from a specific program counsellor. Only 3 (2.7%) had been counselled by a Regional Social Service Counsellor.

* A complete discussion of findings and corresponding tables is presented in Appendix A.

- the majority (i.e., over 50%) of respondents listed the following as program expectations: gain confidence, train on the job, learn new job skills, upgrade, and career planning. It is interesting that no trainee cited increased income as an expectation of their program.

2. Cohort (Follow-Up) Questionnaire

- 57 valid follow-up cases where included in the Cohort (Follow-Up) sample. This comprised 34.8% of the original sample.

a) Profile of Sample

- of 53 valid respondents, 35 (66.0%) had returned to work either full or part-time following their respective programs.
- 27 (51.9%) of 52 respondents noted that their current source of income was wages or salary. A total of 16 (30.1% respondents had returned to social assistance.

b) Barriers to Employment

Client-Perceived Past Barriers

- limited job experience and education level were cited more often than any other barriers with 26 (45.6%) and 24 (42.1%) respectively.

Critical Life Incidents

- of 51 respondents, 26 (51.0%) had experienced a critical life incident e.g., loss of job, family break-up, etc. since first responding to the Cohort (In-Program) Questionnaire. It is apparent that this is an unusually high rate of acute or critical life events and merits further investigation throughout this study.

c) Preferred Learning Environment

- the preferred scenario for a learning environment did not change, with smaller groups (i.e., less than 10 persons) preferred to larger in a job-like or classroom setting, and no preference for age.

d) Client/Program Expectations

Client Distribution

- 55 program participants described whether they had completed, left prior to completion, or were still involved in a program.
- 39 (70.9%) had completed an employment training program.
- the majority of completers, 24 (63.1%) had spent between one and six months in a program, suggesting that length of program must have some affect on the completion prospects of the trainee.

Use of Program-Based Skills

- 39 (70.9%) individuals had worked since learning the program; 20 (51.3%) of these stated they had made use of skills learned in a program, suggesting that the other 48.7%, or half, had no use for these skills. Thus, course content may be an area of further concentration for program developers.

Perception of Program Effectiveness

- 38 (69.1%) of a 55 case sample felt that employment training helped them to over come personal employment barriers.
- 17 (30.9%) did not find programs to be helpful.
- all 38 respondents who found training helpful noted 'improved self-confidence' as a product of training.
- 32 (57.1%) felt that they had developed new job skills, and 31 (55.4%) had effectively upgraded in a school or job-related area.

* A complete discussion of findings and corresponding tables is presented in Appendix B.

3. Point-In-Time Questionnaire

a) Profile of Sample

Sex

- total sample size was 112 respondents including 77 (70.6%) males and 32 (29.4%) females, with 3 respondents not specifying sex.

Age

- average age of respondent was 31.3 years.
- largest single age range was 35 (32.7%) respondents who fell between 25 - 34 years of age.

Dependents

- of 102 respondents, 100% (n=102) had at least one dependent, i.e., they were either a parent or had an individual at home who was not a spouse but legally dependent upon them.

Employment

- of 112 respondents, only 23 (20.5%) had worked at all since leaving an employment training programs or initiating social assistance.
- 89 (79.5%) had been on social assistance on average of 40.9 weeks. Of these, 39 (43.0%) had been receiving benefits for greater than one month, but less than six months.
- 21 (23.6%) had been on social assistance for more than one year.
- average length of time since clients had last worked (including program time) was 64 weeks.
- average length of last employment was 61.6 weeks, or slightly more than one year.

b) Barriers to Employment

- of 108 respondents, 45 (41.7%) indicated 'lack of job experience' as a barrier.
- 32 (28.6%) noted lower education and a lack of acquired skill level as barriers.
- 42 (44.7%) of 94 respondents had experienced a critical life incident, either positive or negative since leaving a program or beginning social assistance.

- crosstabs indicate income and employment as the two most negatively affected areas of life situation.
- crosstabs indicate that 30 (71.4%) of 42 respondents who had experienced a critical life incident cited that these events were the reason for their return to social assistance.

c) Employment Training Exposure

- of 111 respondents, 32 (28.8%) had been in an employment training program over the preceding year.
- 9 (28.1%) did not complete, while 21 (65.6%) had completed their respective programs.
- of the 32 who were in a program, 18 (56.2%) were on social assistance before entering a program, while 14 (43.8%) had no previous benefits.
- only 15 (46.8%) of 32 trainees had originally been counselled by a professional worker or counsellor prior to starting a program.

d) Perceived Effectiveness

- 21 (62.5%) of 32 respondents found employment training to be effective and beneficial.
- 8 (25.0%) respondents did not find their program to be of help.
- 3 (12.5%) respondents did not answer this question.

* A complete discussion of findings and corresponding tables is presented in Appendix C.

4. Key Informant Interview Schedule

a) Profile of Sample

- 30 key informants comprised a purposive sample of program and referral system managers, program and employment counsellors, Regional Social Services workers, and curricular consultants/instructors from across Hamilton-Wentworth.

Informants by Position

- largest representative sub-sample was program and employment counsellors, with 12 (40.0%) of the overall sample. In addition, the sample comprised 8 (26.7%) social service workers, 5 (16.7%) managers, and 5 (16.7%) curricular consultants/instructors.

Length of Time in Position

- range of job experience ranged from less than one year to twenty-five years of service in employment and training field.
- 10 (33.3%) had been in current positions for between one and two years. This was the modal category for the sample.

Academic and/or Professional Preparation

- 12 (40.0%) informants had a college diploma as their highest level of academic training.
- 18 (60.0%) informants had at least a Bachelor's degree in a related field of study.
- 5 (16.7%) of the total sample had additional accreditation or training in their respective professional fields, e.g., a Certificate of Social Work, a Diploma in Counselling, etc.

b) Duties and Responsibilities

Daily Operations and Administration

- these activities were the sole responsibility of program and referral agency managers (n=5, 16.7%).
- highest priority of concern was staff supervision and delivery of programs.

Client Assessment and Referral

- 25 (83.3%) respondents were involved in assessment and referral. Of these, a total of 14 (46.7%) informants provided personal client counselling including: intake/eligibility review and cross-references to other programs.
- 7 (23.3%) involved themselves in job search counselling while 6 (20.0%) counselled in life skills development and client action-planning.

c) Client/Program Match

Criteria Most Often Used in Assessing Program Eligibility

- most frequent criteria used in programs eligibility assessments were legal barriers (n=16, 53.3%) level of education (n=15, 50.0%), need for child care (n=15, 50.0%) and client's age (n=14, 46.7%).

Reasons for not Referring

- client attitude was identified by 8 (26.7%) informants as the most often encountered reason for non-referral to a program.
- other most frequent reasons included: lack of available and affordable child care (on-site), differing expectations and existing legal barriers.

Most Common Barriers to Employment

- 13 (43.3%) felt that level of education was a barrier.
- 11 (36.7%) rated attitude and client motivation as barriers.
- 6 (20.0%) described lack of adequate information regarding availability of programs as an initial barrier to accessing training.

Client Expectations

- 22 (91.7%) of 24 informants who had regular client contact stated they had counselled clients on personal expectations regarding work and job-related development, e.g., attendance in programs.

Reasons for Leaving Training

- lack of motivation was cited most often, by 6 (20.7%) informants, as the primary reason for leaving a program.

d) Intake and Counselling Procedures

- of 28 informants, only 5 (18.0%) used a more structured (written) administrative procedure with clients.
- 12 (42.9%) used an informal verbal approach and 9 (32.15%) used a balance of verbal and written intake.
- 21 (75.0%) informants also made use of a written employment training plan.
- the majority of informants (n=17, 68.0%) had some regular knowledge of their clients' status after returning them to another program or agency.

* A complete discussion of findings and corresponding tables is presented in Appendix E.

5.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

A. Cohort (Before/After) Study

The discussion of this first study component will focus on three questions originally outlined in the research objectives (refer to page 3).

1. Which variables are best determinants of clients' program expectations and eventual program involvement?
2. What variables are best determinants of clients' completion of a program?
3. What client-based impacts are most prevalent following program involvement, in terms of changes in employability status?

1. Determinants of Client-Program Expectations

In developing a predictive model for client-program expectations, the following variables were entered into a multiple regression analysis: sex, age, home language, marital status, program attended, highest level of education, critical life incidents, frequency of learning experience, number of cohorts preferred in learning environments, preferred learning conditions (e.g., classroom, on-the-job, etc.), age of others in the learning environment, source of counselling and total score on a need for achievement scale[9].

Using a stepwise regression technique, these variables were determined to be significantly associated (p=.001) with program expectations:

- preferred frequency of learning experience
- ages of others in the program
- total score on the Need for Achievement Scale (Nach)
- preferred number of cohorts in the learning environment.

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[9] H.J.M. Hermans (1972), A Questionnaire Measure of Achievement Motivation, Journal of Applied Psychology, 54, 4, 353-363.

Thus, the predictive model*, expressed as a regression equation can be described as:

$$\text{Number of Expectations} = (.5516)\ \text{Frequency of Learning Experience} + (.2508)\ \text{Preferred Age of Others} - (.2465)\ \text{Nach Score} + (.7769)\ \text{Preferred Number of Cohorts}$$

* Variables with a positive (+) sign indicate a positive relationship with the dependent variable, 'number of program expectations'; variables with a negative sign (-) e.g., Nach Score, have a negative relationship with the dependent variable.

By looking more closely at the variance which contributes to the explanation of changes in the dependent variable, 'number of program expectations', it was determined that the independent variable 'frequency of learning experience' helped to explain approximately 55% of the total variance in estimating the number of program expectations of a trainee. This variable is positively correlated to number of program expectations, suggesting that as the preferred frequency of learning sessions increases, so do the number of program expectations.

Preferred age of cohorts in the learning environment is also positively correlated with number of program expectations and indicates that as the ages of others in the class increase, so do the number of program expectations.

In terms of the number of cohorts preferred in the respondent's learning environment, a positive correlation exists, suggesting that, as the number of people around the program participant increases, the more they are apt to have a greater number of expectations for the program. Although the actual correlation (.2607) is not of great magnitude, it does present certain implications for matching clients with programs on the basis of physical surroundings.

There is a negative relationship between score on a Need for Achievement Scale and number of program expectations. This suggests that individuals who generally have a low need for achievement will correspondingly have more program expectations.

Specific types of program expectations were also analyzed with respect to various group differences. Using a series of Chi-square statistical measures which control for specific variables such as income status, age and sex, etc., the following was determined:

- time on social assistance is a significant determinant ($p=.03$) of the need to learn new job skills, suggesting that, the longer a client is on social assistance, the more likely they will feel the need to learn new job skills.
- if a trainee has experienced some sort of critical life event, likely negative, they are more apt to prefer training on the job.
- the age of the trainee plays a role in their need to plan a career for themselves ($p=.08$). Trainees who are younger (i.e., under 35 years) may be more likely to indulge in programs which have a career planning component than older trainees.
- age also plays a role in determining whether or not trainees seek academic upgrading. This is logical, assuming that younger trainees have only recently left a formal educational environment.
- also, if a trainee has experienced a negative critical life event just prior to entering a program, they are more likely to need development and training in confidence building areas.

2. Determinants of Program Completion

Using a stepwise multiple regression analysis, a predictive model for program completion was developed using the following variables: length of time in the program, total barriers to employment, time since last worked, sex, age, critical life incidents, program attended, home language and total score on a Need for Achievement Scale[10].

Correlations with the dependent variable 'program completion', significant at the $p=.001$ level, were derived from these variables:

- length of time in the program
- total barriers to employment
- time since last worked

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[10] H.J.M. Hermans (1972), p.353-363.

As a regression equation, the model is thus,

$$\text{Program Completion} = (.3472)\ \text{Total Barriers} - (.2997)\ \text{Time in Program to Employment} - (.3331)\ \text{Time Since Last Worked}$$

There is a positive relationship between the total number of barriers a client must face and the likelihood that they will complete a program, meaning the more barriers a client must face, the more likely they will complete the program. Also, the less time a client has been unemployed, the more likely they will be to complete the program.

The independent variable 'length of time in the program' has a modest negative relationship with program completion. This suggests that the less time a trainee has spent in a program, the more likely they are to complete it. Further investigation is suggested in order to determine which program factors, if any, may lead to this finding. This variable also appears to be the best overall predictor of program completion, contributing to approximately 30% of the total explained variation in the dependent variable.

3. Post-Program Client Status

A series of statistical analyses were carried out to determine whether or not there were significant group differences on the basis of certain employment-based variables after leaving a training program.

Program Completion and Work Status

There is a significant difference, at the $p=.02$ level, between trainees who have worked and those who have not worked on the basis of whether they completed a training program to its full term. While the variance between working and non-working groups does not appear to differ greatly, the group means comparison suggests that trainees who were not working immediately following a program experience were also less likely to have completed that program. That is, they may have dropped out prior to its normal length of session.

In terms of whether or not trainees have worked since leaving a program, t-tests to determine group differences indicated no significant difference on the basis of age, sex, time on social assistance, critical life incident and time since last worked. However, level of education before training was a modestly significant determinant at the p=.09 level. A comparison of working and non-working groups shows that the group means were fairly comparable in terms of average level of education. However, there was greater variability in the grade levels of those respondents who have worked after leaving a program than those who have not. It is logical to assume, then, a greater range of educational experience for the working group. It further suggests that the non-working group represents a more "middle-of-the road" range of education experience (i.e., secondary level), whereas trainees of working status may fall more often into categories above or below the mean (i.e., post-secondary or grade school).

Use of Skills Learned in Program

No significant differences were found between group means, on the basis of whether or not program-based skills were being used after leaving a program. Thus, the need and ability to use skills learned in a program were not dependent upon any specific determinant or characteristic. Variables investigated included age, sex, total Nach Score, highest level of education, and whether or not the trainee completed the program. This implies that there is not any one particular skill which is used more than others after leaving a program and suggests that programs are, generally, effective in providing trainees with a range of skills relating to work force entry.

Perceived Effectiveness

As indicated in Table B-5 (Appendix B), a majority of trainees found their respective programs to be effective in fulfilling their involvement needs.

Tests of significance (p=.02) were carried out on these variables: social assistance status, number of dependents, time on social assistance, and critical life incidents. Only number of dependents was statistically significant as a determinant of perceived effectiveness, implying that those trainees who had dependents, were more often likely to find programs effective than other groups of trainees.

In an attempt to more clearly define a predictive model for perceived effectiveness, a stepwise regression analysis was carried out on these variables: age, sex, marital status, number of dependents, on social assistance, total barriers to employment, home language, critical life incidents, participated in another program, who counselled that client, importance of work and whether the respondent had not worked.

The resulting model for perceived effectiveness included these variables:

$$\text{Perceived Effectiveness} = (.3922)\ \text{Have Participated in Another Program} + (.4156)\ \text{Who Counselled} - (.1059)\ \text{Importance of Work} + (.1705)\ \text{Have Not Worked}$$

Approximately 39% of the variability in the dependent variable was accounted for by the independent variable 'participated in another program' and 42% of the total explained variance was attributable to 'who counselled'.

A strong positive relationship exists between participation in another program and perceived effectiveness of the previous program attended. There was also a strong positive relationship between type of counselling prior to the program and perceived effectiveness. On the basis of selected responses, those clients who did not receive any formal counselling (e.g., a case worker or C.E.C. counsellor) were more likely to find their respective programs helpful than others. Knowing that these clients were, in a sense, "self referrals", this suggests that the more 'pertinent' information a client has with regard to matching their personal needs and expectations to a program, the more likely they will find the program helpful.

Those respondents who had not worked were less likely to be participating in another program. Also, those who were in a subsequent program were more apt to have been counselled by an employment training professional.

There was a negative relationship between importance of work and perceived helpfulness of programs. This suggests that, as the importance placed on work increases, perceived effectiveness (in this case, by respondents who have returned to social assistance) may decrease. However, a very small correlation

(-.0016) suggests that caution should be taken in assuming any relativeness of this variable to the predictive model of perceived effectiveness.

There is a strong positive relationship between not working after leaving a program and perceived effectiveness. It suggests that even clients who have not worked after a program experience still found it helpful. It also suggests that the reasons clients found programs to be helpful were not based on work potential alone; perhaps it is based on some other quality area, such as life skills or basic education.

B. Point-In-Time Study

This study component focused on reasons why trainees either apply for or return to social assistance after leaving an employment training program.

1. Group Differences

A series of t-tests and chi-square statistics were carried out to determine if there were significant differences between certain groups, e.g., age, sex, marital, etc., on specific variables.

On Social Assistance Before Program

There were no significant differences between groups on whether or not individuals had been on social assistance before starting employment training. Variables tested included sex, age, currently on social assistance, time since last worked, participation in another program and critical life incidents. In particular, it is worthy to note that being on social assistance before program entry is not a significant factor in the individual's decision to participate in a program.

Involvement in a Program Before Applying for Benefits

At the p=.02 level of statistical significance, there was a difference in terms of the total number of barriers to employment and whether or not an individual became involved in a training program. A much greater variance existed between the number of barriers face by clients who did not enter a program. Group means indicate that those having fewer barriers to employment are more likely to pursue additional employment training and less likely to return to social assistance because of previous barriers.

Perceived Program Effectiveness

There were no significant group differences on the basis of whether or not individuals found employment training to be helpful. Variables tested included: sex, age, social assistance now, time on social assistance and time since last worked. It is interesting that no significant differences were generated with regard to current status on social assistance and the length of time since last worked. Logically, it is presumed that an increase in these variables should see a corresponding decrease in perceived effectiveness by the client.

2. Reason for Application for Return to Social Assistance

A predictive model for determining why trainees formerly on social assistance return to social assistance was generated through stepwise multiple regression. Variables originally entered into the analysis included: sex, age, number of dependents, home language, time since last worked, importance of work, on social assistance before the program, perceived effectiveness, critical life incident, participated in another program since completing/leaving the program, total barriers to employment and time since leaving the program.

The following variables were associated, either positively or negatively, at the p=.001 level of significance, with reason for return to social assistance after leaving a program:

- having a critical life incident
- involvement in employment training
- type of critical incident experienced following the program
- marital status
- participated in another program since completing/leaving the program.

Using an equation format, the predictive model for 'return to social assistance' is:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Return to Social Assistance} = {} & (.0780)\ \text{Having a Critical Life Incident} + (.8639)\ \text{Type of Critical Life Incident} \\ & - (.1765)\ \text{Involvement in a Program} - (.0814)\ \text{Marital Status} \\ & + (.0897)\ \text{Have Participated in Another Program Since Leaving}\end{aligned}$$

Statistically, this model explains nearly 86% of the variance in predicting 'reasons for return to social assistance'. However, the change in this variance after only the first variable had been entered into the regression equation was minimal. Looking more closely at the Beta weights, expressed as a percentage of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable, suggests that, although all variables in the predictive model are significantly associated (p=.001) with 'reason for return to social assistance', only 'type of critical life incident' contributes most to changes.

The variable, 'type of critical life incident' is positively associated with a return to social assistance. Using tests to measure significant group differences, at the p=.004 level, it was determined that respondents who had experienced a recent negative critical life incident were more likely to have returned to social assistance than other respondents. A comparatively larger variability in scores for trainees experiencing a negative incident versus a positive incident suggests that these incidents may be related to a broad range of negative events leading to the respondents' eventual return to social assistance. Indeed, using the regression model, it is predicted that, as the number of negative critical life incidents increases after leaving a program so does the probability that a client will return to social assistance. Examples of a negative life incident include an acute illness after leaving a program or marital break-up, to name only two.

A critical life incident may take various forms relating to quality of life and general well-being of the individual. Areas may include, for example:

employment and income, family, marital status, health, education, legal areas, etc.

Further statistical testing, using chi-square measures to examine group differences suggest that there were no significant differences with regard to the type of negative critical life incident which might lead an individual to return to social assistance (p=.02). Thus, it is fair to assume that return to social assistance following a program is more likely due to more than one or a chain of negative personal life events than to one specific incident. It is also assumed that these incidents are not exclusive to one life area e.g., income status.

Other variables which contribute to the predictive model include 'involvement in training', 'marital status', and 'have participated in another program'. There is a negative relationship between 'involvement in training' and 'return to social assistance', which suggests that if clients have been involved in a program they are less likely to return to social assistance than those who go off benefits for some other reason e.g., for a short term job, or if they had left the Region temporarily.

'Marital status' is negatively related to 'return to social assistance', suggesting that non-married (i.e., single) clients are more likely to return to assistance after a program than their married counterparts.

'Participated in another program', is also positively related to 'return to social assistance'. It can be assumed that, clients who tend to participate in a series of programs, one after the other, are more likely to end up back on social assistance benefits in the long run.

In addition to variables entered into the regression model, a number of t-tests to determine group differences on specified variables relating to a return to social assistance were carried out. A comparison of group means (p=.03) regarding whether or not a respondent was on social assistance before a program was a significant reason for being on after program involvement determined that individuals on assistance before are less likely to return following a program than those not previously on assistance. This comparison also indicated that factors other than pre-program income status may have contributed to their return to assistance.

Group means for those who were recently involved in a training program and those who were not differed with regard to return to social assistance due to a critical life incident at the p=.04 level of significance; those in training were more likely to return to assistance afterwards due to a critical life incident.

At the p=.03 level of statistical significance, respondents who found programs effective were also less likely to return to benefits than those who did not.

C. Referral System Analysis

1. Key Informants - Perceived Effectiveness of Employment Training Programs

Of the thirty key informants interviewed for this component of the study, a majority, or 23 (76.2%) agreed that employment training programs were effective interventions to overcoming client-based barriers to employment. To a lesser degree, 7 (23.8%) felt programs were relatively ineffective.

In terms of how clients benefit most from program exposure, 9 (31.0%) indicated skills development opportunities and felt that a more direct point of entry into the job market was possible post-program. Seven (23.0%) identified increased self-motivation, better social skills, and improved life skills as additional benefits.

Other strengths associated with program involvement included: a more informed understanding of the job market, increased self-esteem, more realistic knowledge of work expectations and better job search skills.

Respondents also criticized certain program structures and the general process of referrals for the following: inability of program to build on basics, the introduction of too many client steps or extraneous variables, duplication of similar services and inadequate support systems (e.g., providing subsidized child care to program participants).

2. Key Informants - Recommendations for the Referral Process

At each level of informant status (i.e., mangers, counsellors, social service workers and instructors), a number of changes which would improve upon or enhance the existing system of employment training referrals in the region were recommended.

a) Decision-Making

Informants at the management level were concerned with the need for more unilateral decision-making across programs and agencies regarding client referrals. In general, they perceived a lack of effectiveness with the cross-referral system throughout the region. Both program and employment counsellors agreed with this concern and noted that, with greater coordination 'at the top', the potential for more efficient and effective problem-solving and client-matching for social assistance clients would improve.

Social Service Workers felt that a decrease in the duplication of services between departments and agencies vis-a-vis a more centralized system of coordination and placement was critical. Assessment of clients for employment training should be standardized and carried out by 'trained employment counsellors' rather than placing the assessment and decisions about client training needs "... into the laps of the workers". Through a centralized and streamlined assessment process, decisions which have formerly moved clients around the system might decrease with a corresponding improvements in effective placements.

b) Client Intake and Eligibility

All levels of respondents agreed that, at the intake level, counsellors and workers require a better knowledge of client needs and personal expectations. There is a need for intake staff to be more thorough and consistent in terms of criteria for program entry, while concurrently becoming more accepting and adaptive to the needs of the client, e.g., providing an adequate training allowance as a prerequisite to participation.

A majority of respondents also proposed that the system, as it exists to serve the social assistance-based population, should restrict the number of entry points currently available for clients to access training programs. Consequently, better control on the dynamics of the entire referral system could be maintained. Through a more comprehensive base of intake and administration, for example, standardized eligibility requirements, informants felt that initial or direct referrals would increase and secondary referrals would decrease, thus streamlining the entire process.

Employment counsellors were also concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of screening social assistance clients for referrals to their offices, noting that workers needed to be better informed about other areas in the system and which avenues to pursue.

c) Communication within the Referral System

Program managers expressed a need for the promotion of greater awareness of employment training programs amongst counsellors and clients, especially those programs of lesser client caseloads. Counsellors from various programs felt the communication links between social service workers and employment counselling sources (e.g., C.E.C., Y.E.C., E.S.U.) needed greater definition through more direct contact with each other. This could take a number of forms, including meetings and workshops, telephone contact, interagency memoranda, etc.. This would create the opportunity for a more focused and streamlined volume of clients who are both informed and motivated to participate. The perception is that the current network is clouded, having weaknesses at certain linkage points. Thus, it is often the case that a client may never even make contact with an employment training program, after initial counselling, let alone gain access.

Social Service Workers agree that more direct linkages would be beneficial, although much coordination and planning would be necessary to develop a workable formula. Workers also felt that many social assistance clients fail to link up with the next step in the referral process, e.g., going to a Canada Employment Centre or the Regional Employment Services Unit. Thus, there is a need for Income Maintenance Workers to direct potential employment training clients through some sort of channelling source, such as an assessment counsellor, to facilitate better training choices.

Workers also suggested the development of a comprehensive and updated quick referral source, such as a manual, to provide a better picture of the network at any given point in time. With an improved knowledge of options available to clients the opportunity to make more client-appropriate cross referrals would increase, with a subsequent decrease in less effective referrals.

Curricular consultants and instructors suggested that more information sessions and program open houses be set up as part of beginning to tap into community resources already in existence.

d) System Development and Coordination

Managers across all groups related the need to approach the system of referring social assistance clients in a more sensitive and holistic manner. For example, school boards, private business, and government could come together and service or coordinate the needs of the client on social assistance. Within the normal educational system, there is a need for more work-related educational alternatives and better continuity between legislated school attendance and employment training programs later on.

Program and employment counsellors indicated the need to reduce the effects of fragmentation in service coordination through improved coordination of referral process and the program structure. In general, programs need to become more structurally flexible in order to suit the needs of a continuous and changing client population. Certain of these changes that were identified included: length of programs, number of client attempts accepted for program completion and client-program eligibility.

Counsellors and workers concur that there are too many barriers and/or steps involved in the present system making it difficult for counsellors of social assistance clients to determine the most appropriate route for a given client. Thus, continued streamlining is essential.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section focuses on specific conclusions which can be derived from both client and system-based study measures. It will present conclusive statements to coincide with those research questions originally outlined in the background and introduction of the study. From these statements a series of recommendations are presented for consideration by various planning groups involved in the employment training field.

Given the limitations placed on this study by the samples collected, and the exploratory nature of the research, caution is suggested regarding the direct application of these conclusions to the general population of social assistance recipients. However, within the parameters of the immediate study, these statements can be considered valid and provide evidence about the "nature" of the social assistance training population.

1. Determinants of Program Expectations and Program Completion

Program Expectations

Frequency of learning opportunities, number of others in the learning environment, age of others in the class and need for achievement are all significant determinants of program expectations.

As the preferred frequency of learning increases, the number of program expectations also increase. Likewise, expectations also increase when a trainee prefers older classmates and more people around them in their learning environment. Perhaps the perceived stability of belonging to an older, more mature group of trainees is comforting and less stressful for the participant, allowing for a more relaxed environment in which to learn.

A lower score on a Need for Achievement Scale also serves only as a modest indicator of number of program expectations. This is supported by other research[10] which has suggested that individuals with lower need for achievement tend to prefer more diverse and, perhaps, less challenging stimuli than others.

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10 Grant Corbett (1981), Social Services Department Procedures as Reinforcing Client Dependency, Unpublished Master's Thesis, McMaster University.

This would then be reflected in a higher total number of expectations by trainees.

The implications this information may hold for the intake and initial referral groups who deal with client expectations are very evident. It suggests that either continued or future consideration should be given by various levels of client intake to matching the perceived expectations of that client with specific program structures (i.e., class size, age of cohorts and frequency of learning opportunities), in addition to program content. Thus, it is recommended that:

1.a) WORKERS INVOLVED IN ASSESSING CLIENT/PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY SHOULD PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON MATCHING THE EXPECTATIONS OF CLIENTS WITH APPROPRIATE PROGRAM CONTENT AND STRUCTURE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:
   i) PREFERRED FREQUENCY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE,
   ii) CLASS SIZE,
   iii) AGE OF PROGRAM COHORTS.

Other variables which significantly influence clients' program expectations include age, evidence of a negative critical life incident before program entry and time on social assistance.

Age of the trainee has a role in determining a client's need to plan a career, as well as seek academic upgrading. It is more likely that younger clients will seek career planning as an expectation and older clients will look for programs relating to upgrading their basic skills.

Individuals who have been on social assistance for longer periods of time are more likely to seek new job skills through a training experience.

Experiencing a negative critical life incident, for example, loss of a job and income, just prior to entering a program is apt to be a determinant of a client's need to have training on the job versus in a classroom. It is also more likely they are seeking not only job skills, but confidence building as products of this experience.

These previously stated personal situational variables are determinants of program needs by clients which should also be emphasized by both intake and program staff. Thus, it is further recommended, that:

1.b) INTAKE AND PROGRAM COUNSELLING STAFF SHOULD PLACE ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS ON CLIENT-PROGRAM MATCHING VIS-A-VIS THESE PERSONAL SITUATIONAL VARIABLES:
   i) AGE OF THE TRAINEE,
   ii) LENGTH OF TIME ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE
   iii) NEGATIVE CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENTS PRIOR TO PROGRAM APPLICATION.

Program Completion

Length of time spent in a program, total number of employment barriers and the amount of time since last worked are all predictive measures of program completion.

The less time one has spent in a program, regardless of income status, the more likely they will complete the program to its fullest term. Thus, as time goes by in a program, the likelihood that some unanticipated factor leading to drop-out may exist is increased. Perhaps clients begin feeling more vulnerable the longer they are without a meaningful income or, they may face new changes in their surrounding environment which might influence their early departure. Perhaps motivation lessens with an increased program length. Certainly, there are implications for these factors in terms of how long programs should actually operate from initial intake to program completion. It implies that an increased retention rate might be better determined using programs which are of lesser length. Of course, this does not also imply that content and structure should suffer as a result.

Another implication of these findings is the importance of maintaining a client monitoring strategy or plan throughout each client's tenure in a given program. This is further supported by the key informants who participated in the study and also work very closely with clients who wish to enter training programs. It is recommended then, that:

2.a) GREATER CONSIDERATION AND EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ESTABLISHING PROGRAM LENGTHS WHICH ARE MORE CONDUCIVE TO TRAINEE RETENTION;

AND,

b) PROGRAM AND REFERRAL-BASED MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING MORE COMPLETE CLIENT MONITORING PROCEDURES THROUGHOUT A CLIENT'S INVOLVEMENT AND, PERHAPS, FOR A PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS/HER PROGRAM COMPLETION.

The more barriers which have been placed before a client, regardless of their income status, the more likely he or she will stay in a program to its completion. This also suggests that clients do not always enter programs for a specific or limited reason; they may have a number of personal and/or environmental barriers to overcome. Considering that, in some client-program matching carried out by workers or counsellors, clients may sometimes be referred to "barrier-specific" programs (e.g., Ontario Basic Skills, which caters to Math and English upgrading) which do not address total needs for training, there are implications for better barrier identification and placement of clients. This supports the need for better training of counsellors and referral agents with regard to their knowledge of available program structures suitable for overcoming a client's specific barriers. Thus, it is recommended that: 3. INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN DIRECTING CLIENTS TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS SHOULD HAVE BETTER AND MORE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO INFORMATION REGARDING TRAINING PROGRAMS ACROSS THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH.

It is also more likely that an individual who has been unemployed for only a short period of time (i.e., less than 6 months) will complete a program than a "chronic unemployed" employable person. In this sense, "chronic" refers to a person unable to completely overcome employment barriers over a longer term who is also considered to be employable. This suggests that programs within the Region seem most capable of retaining short-term employable trainees but do not necessarily cater enough to the 'hard core' employable unemployed. In an attempt to develop programs further to adapt to this need, it is recommended that:

4.a) INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE CREATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT OF TRAINING PROGRAMS WITHIN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH SHOULD STRIVE TO PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON MEETING THE TRAINING NEEDS OF THE LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED.

In a 1985 Social Planning and Research Council study, regarding the impact of the recession on women in Hamilton-Wentworth, a recommendation was made regarding the need for training programs to be consistent with labour market demand trends and that both the 'hard core' and structurally unemployed be defined as target groups. In keeping with this, it is incumbent upon program funders that:

4.b) IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED, INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN A PROGRAM FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT SHOULD STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT MATCH BETWEEN TRAINING PROGRAM STRUCTURE/CONTENT AND CURRENT LABOUR MARKET DEMAND TRENDS AS A MEANS OF BETTER PREPARING THE TRAINEE FOR ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE.

2. Program Impacts on Clients

Work Status

In terms of post-program work status, trainees who follow programs through to completion and do not drop out are more likely to find employment immediately after leaving than those who do leave prematurely.

Also, trainees having a level of formal education at either less than grade 10 or at least post-secondary are more likely to find work after training. This bimodal phenomenon assumes a parallel distribution with that of the current economic labour force in the region, which indicates a greater expansion of job markets within the general service sector and professional occupations than any another employment area.[11] This suggests that program components which deal with preparation for job search and employment strategies for individual clients may need to incorporate specific strategies for their clients which reflect the real job market for their skills. Thus, it is recommended that:

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[11] Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, Economic Development Department (1988), Greater Hamilton, Greater Profits, Section 5.0.

5. IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS, WITHIN VARIOUS PROGRAMS, MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING AND MONITORING JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES FOR CLIENTS WHICH REFLECT CURRENT EMPLOYMENT MARKET TRENDS.

Use of Skills Learned in Program

Most program trainees, regardless of whether or not they were on social assistance, make use of skills acquired through their respective programs. This suggests that program involvement in itself is useful and constructive for the client. This implies that, at the very least, a minimal number of skills are used by trainees and thus, it is recommended that:

6.a) IN THE FUTURE, CONTINUED EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON MEETING THE APPROPRIATE SKILL NEEDS OF CLIENTS AS THEY RELATE TO VARIOUS AREAS OF THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE AND GENERAL WELL-BEING.

AND,

b) TO ASSIST SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS IN THEIR MOVEMENT TOWARD A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE, VIA SKILLS TRAINING, GOVERNMENTS, SHOULD ENSURE ADEQUATE INCENTIVE MECHANISMS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION IN THE FORM OF :

- FINANCIAL SUBSIDY (i.e., TRAINING ALLOWANCES)
- ADEQUATE AND SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE
- ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCES

Overcoming Barriers of "Dependents"

Trainees having dependents (usually children) are less likely to find programs helpful in meeting their needs than those with no one to depend on their income. This is often likely due to factors which are situational, such as lack of available and affordable child care or transportation. These present logistical barriers to accessing a program. While the program itself may be most appropriate for the client, these barriers make access nearly impossible.

It is recommended that:

7. FUTURE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN, AT ALL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING REFERRAL AND DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS OF PROSPECTIVE TRAINEES PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO OVERCOMING "DEPENDENT-BASED" BARRIERS.

Critical Life Incidents

Program trainees who return to social assistance after program completion are more likely capable of coping with a negative critical life incident than their non-trained social assistance counterparts. This suggests that, at some point during training, these trainees have learned to develop "coping strategies" or have adopted a more positive approach to dealing with these incidents. This also implies that certain aspects of these programs e.g., life skills, may be effectively providing trainees with a number of skills other than job skills alone. As a result, it is recommended that:

8.a) IT IS CONTINGENT UPON PLANNERS WORKING WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING REFERRALS IN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH, TO CONTINUE WITH SUPPORT FOR THE PROMOTION OF LIFE SKILLS, BASIC EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EMPLOYMENT SEARCH STRATEGIES WITHIN PROGRAMS;

AND,

b) WHERE APPROPRIATE, WORKERS AND COUNSELLORS WHO REFER CLIENTS TO EMPLOYMENT TRAINING SHOULD STRIVE TO INCORPORATE BOTH JOB-RELATED AND LIFE-RELATED SKILLS IN THEIR CLIENTS' RESPECTIVE TRAINING PLANS.

3. Reasons for Return to Social Assistance

It can be concluded, initially, that a client who participates in another program or series of programs following his or her current involvement is more likely to return to social assistance at some future point than other trainees. The implications are two fold. First, there is a need to more closely examine a client's history of work and related barriers prior to intake to ensure the best possible program match in terms of long range client strategies. Subsequently, it suggests that closer monitoring of clients from intake to post-program status is necessary as a means of reducing the cycle of training and dependence on social assistance to a negligible factor.

Trainees who were receiving social assistance before entering a program are less likely to return to assistance due to program effects after leaving a program and more likely to return due to some unforeseen factor, such as the loss of a job or an acute illness.

Length of time away from a program is also a determinant of return to social assistance. The longer a client has been out of a program, the more likely they are to return to benefits of one type or another. This emphasizes the need for closer monitoring and follow-up of a client's status post-program, perhaps through some evaluative means in order to channel clients towards job search activities or re-direct their focus into other training areas. Thus, it is recommended that:

9. MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON FOLLOW-UP AND ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEES AFTER LEAVING AN EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE TRANSITION FROM PROGRAM TO WORKFORCE OR IN REDIRECTING AND ASSISTING THE TRAINEE TOWARDS HIS OR HER NEXT APPROPRIATE TRAINING EXPERIENCE.

Regardless of whether or not the client was on social assistance before program entry, if they have experienced a negative critical life incident while still in a program they are more susceptible to leaving before completion and applying for assistance, rather than staying in the program.

Likewise, after completing a program, it is a more likely that a trainee will apply for or return to social assistance due to some negative critical life incident than for any other reason or factor. This implies that external or environmental factors beyond the immediate or personal control of the client may play the largest role in the determination of a client's post-program application for benefits.

On the basis of additional testing to determine if certain types of negative critical life incidents (e.g., illness, injury, loss of a job, etc.)

were better predictors of return to social assistance, it can be concluded that this return is not due to incidents affecting one life area exclusively, e.g., work status. Indeed, it is possible that more than one, perhaps a chain of negative life events may be contributing to the client's personal situation.

Drawing from these conclusions, there is a need to provide greater supports and incentives to encourage and maintain trainees while in programs and a similar system of "strategic" supports during the post-program experience. This would better promote a model of transition for the client which would enable them in coping more effectively with negative critical life incidents as they arise. It is therefore recommended that:

10. FUNDING AND COORDINATING BODIES INVOLVED WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING NETWORK OF PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH SHOULD PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON ASSISTING TRAINEES IN COPING WITH CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENTS IMPEDING THE TRANSITION OF THE INDIVIDUAL FROM THE TRAINING EXPERIENCE TO AN EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE.

4. Gaps in Services Throughout the Referral System

Throughout the referral system of employment training in Hamilton-Wentworth, persons involved in the planning, development and adminstration of programs and related service think there are a number of benefits and drawbacks associated with the involvement of social assistance recipients in these programs. Based on information provided by these key informants, certain conclusions may be drawn.

First, employment training programs are effective tools for developing job-related, motivational and life skills. Clients leave programs with a more realistic understanding of work and the work force. However, at the level of client referrals and matching, there is a need for more consistent decision-making across all programs and agencies and a more centralized system of coordination and placement to expedite these referrals to programs. Thus, it is recommended that:

11.a) A STRENGTHENED SYSTEM OF COORDINATION AND PLACEMENT OF CLIENTS, PARTICULARLY SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BY THOSE AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF THESE SERVICES.

AND,

b) EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON BRINGING KEY REFERRAL SYSTEM ACTORS (E.G., SOCIAL SERVICES, C.E.C.'S, PROGRAMS) TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH A WORKING MODEL FOR THIS DELIVERY.

AND,

c) IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL POLICIES REGARDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRACTICES, MORE COMMUNITY CITIZENS, PARTICULARLY TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DISCUSSION ABOUT INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES WITHIN THE REGION.

There is a need for intake staff at all levels of service i.e., Income Maintenance, C.E.C.'s and individual programs to be more consistent in evaluating program entry criteria, as well as more adaptive to client needs. Through more comprehensive and standardized referrals, the number of initial or direct referrals to specific programs would improve dramatically, enabling a streamlining of the process.

A greater knowledge of program content and eligibility criteria is also needed, especially by those workers involved in directing social assistance clients i.e., social assistance to employment training. More direct linkages between various levels within the system are also necessary.

Development of a "quick reference" index to program information and eligibility criteria is one solution given by those who counsel clients in employment training. There is also a need for Regional Social Services Income Maintenance workers to have access to a specifically trained assessment counsellor within the department who deals with employment training strategies and who could serve as a liaison with other programs and referral agencies across the region. Thus, it is recommended that:

12.a) A COMPREHENSIVE REFERENCE OR INDEX SYSTEM OF PROGRAM AND REFERRAL INFORMATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED BY A SPECIFIC GROUP OR AGENCY FROM WITHIN THE REGION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH;

AND,

b) A SPECIFIC TRAINING ASSESSMENT COUNSELLOR SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE REGIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES INCOME MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT TO ASSIST SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN BETTER FACILITATING TRAINING CHOICES FOR CLIENTS AND TO SERVE AS A COMMUNITY LIAISON WITH OTHER EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PLANNING GROUPS WITHIN THE REGION.

In terms of program development and coordination, there is a need to develop more work-related educational alternatives, a better continuity between formal school training at the secondary level and movement into employment-specific training for individuals who may not be pursuing post-secondary studies. It is therefore recommended that:

13. MORE AND BETTER CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT TRAINING BODIES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AS A MEANS OF PLANNING BETTER STRATEGIES FOR SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS ANTICIPATING A MORE IMMEDIATE TRANSITION INTO THE WORK FORCE FOLLOWING COMPLETION.

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APPENDIX A

COHORT (IN-PROGRAM) QUESTIONNAIRE

1.0 Covering Letter and Questionnaire

2.0 Discussion

3.0 Tables

The Social Planning
& Research Council of Hamilton and District
155 James St. S., 6th Floor, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 3A4 Telephone: 522-1148

A-1

April, 1988

Dear Job Training Program Participant:

The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District is currently involved in a project which looks at a number of job training programs, such as yours, in the Hamilton-Wentworth region. As part of this project, we are interested in feedback that you, as a program participant, could give us about:

a) how you think and feel about work;

b) what you expect from your current job training program.

Attached to this letter, you will find two separate sections:

First, there is a CONTACT SHEET for your name and address. Please fill this in completely. This information will not be used in the actual research but is needed to contact you again in a few months and will remain confidential.

The second section is a short QUESTIONNAIRE which should also be filled in completely. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. For each part of the questionnaire, there are brief directions to follow as a guide. When you have finished, please put both the contact sheet and the questionnaire in the envelope provided (no stamp is needed) and drop it in any mailbox.

If you have any questions about the project or have any problems in filling in the questionnaire, please call me at 522-1148. Thank you for your important contribution to this project.

Sincerely,

Caroline Ball

Caroline Ball,
Research Associate.

CB:sk
Encl.

SECTION II

PLEASE READ - INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your co-operation in agreeing to complete and return this questionnaire. Your input will be most valuable to our study results.

The questionnaire has been designed to gather information and opinions from you regarding your current feelings about work and what you expect from the job training program in which you are now involved.

Please follow the directions at the beginning of each section and complete the questionnaire in full. When you have finished, return the questionnaire in the envelope provided. No postage is necessary.

JOB TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Before starting this questionnaire, would you please answer the following questions by filling in the blanks or placing a check (✓) in the box provided.

(NOTE: This information will remain strictly confidential and is necessary in order to send you a second package at a later date in 1988.)

TODAY'S DATE: ________ Day ________ Month ________ Year

YOUR SEX: ( ) Male ( ) Female

YOUR DATE OF BIRTH: ________ Month ________ Year

YOUR MARITAL STATUS:

( ) Never Married
( ) Currently Married
( ) Separated/Divorced)
( ) Widowed
( ) Other, specify ________

What language do you speak at home? ________

What is the name of your present job training program?

( ) Focus for Skills
( ) Ontario Basic Skills
( ) Basic Job Readiness Training
( ) Futures
( ) Women into Trades and Technologies
( ) Other ________

When did you start this program? ________ Month ________ Year

Code Number: ____________
(SPRC use only)

JOB TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

I Please respond to each of the following items by placing a check (✓) in the appropriate box.

1. Working is something:
   - ( ) I don't like at all
   - ( ) I don't like doing very much
   - ( ) I neither like or dislike
   - ( ) I like doing
   - ( ) I like doing very much
2. I admire people who are successful in their jobs:
   - ( ) very much
   - ( ) much
   - ( ) little
   - ( ) not at all
3. For leisure and relaxation, I find:
   - ( ) I never have any time
   - ( ) I often have no time
   - ( ) I sometimes have too little time
   - ( ) I usually have enough time
   - ( ) I always have time
4. I am usually:
   - ( ) very busy
   - ( ) not busy
   - ( ) busy
   - ( ) not so busy
   - ( ) not busy at all
5. I can work at something without getting tired for:
   - ( ) a very long time
   - ( ) a long time
   - ( ) not too long a time
   - ( ) only a short time
   - ( ) only a very short time
6. Good relations with my instructors in a training programme:
   - ( ) are very important
   - ( ) are important
   - ( ) are not so important
   - ( ) are not at all important
7. When I was last in school, I worked:
   - ( ) extremely hard
   - ( ) very hard
   - ( ) not so hard
   - ( ) only a little
   - ( ) not at all
8. Being organized is something:
   - ( ) I like doing very much
   - ( ) I like doing
   - ( ) I don't like doing very much
   - ( ) I don't like doing at all

9. When I start something, I:
   - ( ) never finish it
   - ( ) seldom finish it
   - ( ) sometimes finish it
   - ( ) usually finish it
   - ( ) always finish it

10. I am:
    - ( ) very often bored
    - ( ) often bored
    - ( ) sometimes bored
    - ( ) hardly ever bored
    - ( ) never bored

11. Other people think I:
    - ( ) work very hard
    - ( ) work hard
    - ( ) work fairly hard
    - ( ) don't work very hard
    - ( ) don't work hard at all

12. Taking a long time to get ready for important tasks is:
    - ( ) senseless
    - ( ) often not worth it
    - ( ) sometimes useful
    - ( ) a realistic thing to do
    - ( ) needed to be successful

13. When I am working, my expectations of myself are:
    - ( ) very high
    - ( ) high
    - ( ) pretty high
    - ( ) not so high
    - ( ) low
    - ( ) very low

14. When I was last in school or in a course, I usually:
    - ( ) tried to do my best and make a good impression
    - ( ) paid close attention to things being said
    - ( ) found my attention wandering to other thoughts
    - ( ) was more interested in things that had nothing to do with school

15. I usually do:
    - ( ) much more than I set out to do
    - ( ) a bit more than I set out to do
    - ( ) a little less than I set out to do
    - ( ) much less than I set out to do

16. If I have said that I will do a task well and have done it poorly, then:
    - ( ) I continue to try my best and complete it
    - ( ) I try once again
    - ( ) I tend to give up
    - ( ) I usually give up

17. When I was still in school, the importance I placed on my studies was:

( ) very high ( ) average ( ) low ( ) very low

18. In the past, if I was distracted from my work in school, then afterward:

( ) I always went straight back to work
( ) I would take a short break, then go back to work
( ) I would take a longer break, but then go back to work
( ) I found it difficult to start again.

19. If I was offered a job where I was responsible for completing many tasks:

( ) I would like it very much
( ) I would only do it if I was paid well
( ) I don't think I would be capable of doing it
( ) I would not want it at all

20. I think a life where I would not have to work at all is:

( ) ideal
( ) very pleasant
( ) pleasant
( ) unpleasant
( ) very unpleasant

21. If something I am doing has a 50% chance of failure:

( ) I give it up very quickly
( ) I give it up fairly quickly
( ) I don't give it up too soon
( ) I usually see it through to completion

22. In general, I think about the future:

( ) very often
( ) often
( ) not so often
( ) not at all

23. I prefer a job that is important, difficult and involves a 50-50 change of failure to a job which is somewhat important but not difficult.

( ) agree strongly ( ) agree ( ) disagree ( ) disagree strongly

24. Getting turned down after a job interview can be more painful to me than the pleasure of getting hired.

( ) agree strongly ( ) agree ( ) disagree ( ) disagree strongly

II Please answer the following questions by placing a check (✓) in the most appropriate box(es).

1. How long has it been since you attended a school or job training program other than your current involvement?

   ☐ ____________ (Month) ________ (Year) OR ☐ I have never attended

2.a) What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

   ☐ no schooling
   ☐ elementary (grades 1-8)
   ☐ secondary (grades 9-13)
   ☐ college
   ☐ vocational school
   ☐ university
   ☐ other (specify) ____________

   b) How many years did you complete at this level? ____________

3. Do you have a telephone? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Are you presently receiving or do you require any legal services?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Were you sick or injured at any time during the last six months?

   ☐ Yes → Was this sickness/injury serious? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   ☐ No [Go to Question 6]

6.a) When was the last time you spent more than 1 hour with your friends or family?

   ☐ in the last day
   ☐ 2-5 days ago
   ☐ 1 or more week(s) ago

   b) How important are these activities to your own personal happiness?

   ☐ very important
   ☐ important
   ☐ somewhat important
   ☐ not at all important

7.a) In the last six months, have any events seriously affected your way of life?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No [Go to Question 1, p.5]

   b) Was this a positive or negative event?

   ☐ positive ☐ negative

   c) Which area(s) of your life did this affect?

   ☐ marriage/partnership
   ☐ family
   ☐ income
   ☐ job
   ☐ housing
   ☐ education
   ☐ free time/leisure
   ☐ personal health

III Please answer the following questions by placing a check (✓) in the most appropriate box.

1. One week before you began this program, which of the following was a source of income for you?
   - ( ) Social assistance (General Welfare Benefits/Family Benefits)
   - ( ) Wages or a salary
   - ( ) Family Allowance
   - ( ) Unemployment Insurance
   - ( ) Pension (government or other) Please specify ________________
   - ( ) Other ________________________________

2. If you are currently receiving social assistance:

   a) how many months has this been in effect?
   - ( ) 1-2 months
   - ( ) 3-4 months
   - ( ) 5-6 months
   - ( ) 7-11 months
   - ( ) 1 year or more
   - ( ) does not apply to me

   b) how many months have you been looking for a job?
   - ( ) 1-2 months
   - ( ) 3-4 months
   - ( ) 5-6 months
   - ( ) 7-11 months
   - ( ) 1 year or more
   - ( ) does not apply to me

3.a) Since starting this job training program, have you worked for any pay?

( ) Yes ( ) No [Go to Question 4]

b) Was this work: ( ) full-time [35 or more hours per week]?

( ) part-time [less than 35 hours per week]?

4. Have you actively looked for a job since beginning this program?

( ) Yes ( ) No

5.a) When you look for a job, do you usually follow a plan in your search, e.g. newspapers, visiting employers, etc.?

( ) Yes ( ) No

b) Has anyone recently discussed with you how to look for a job?

( ) Yes: specify who ____________________________

( ) No

IV In the following section, please place a check (✓) beside any areas which apply to you.

Which of the following do you expect to achieve or receive from the job training program in which you are now involved?:

( ) Learning new job skills

( ) Writing a resumé

( ) Planning my career

( ) A chance to train on-the-job

( ) Upgrading or improving my school courses

( ) Getting paid while training

( ) Learning daily life skills (e.g., good health, banking, etc.)

( ) Follow-up counselling by program staff after completing the program

( ) A chance to train in a job not normally held by someone like myself

( ) A chance to start working immediately after completing the program

( ) A chance to continue on-the-job training even after the program ends (example = apprenticing)

( ) a chance to feel more confident and good about myself

( ) Other, please specify

____

____

V For each of the following, please place a check (✓) in the box which best describes how you like to learn.

1. I like to learn: ( ) as often as I can ( ) sometimes
( ) often ( ) never

2. The number of people I like around me when I am learning is:
( ) no one, by myself ( ) in a small group less than 10 people ( ) in a large group, more than 10 people

3. I learn best: ( ) in a classroom ( ) in an informal setting, like a coffee shop
( ) in a job-like setting
( ) at home ( ) in a large space, like a hall or auditorium

4. I prefer courses where classes are offered:
( ) once a week ( ) every day, Monday to Friday ( ) no preference
( ) 2-3 times a week ( ) on weekends

5. I prefer courses where others in the class are:
( ) older than me ( ) younger than me ( ) no preference
( ) about my age ( ) all ages

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!

2.0 DISCUSSION

2.1 Profile of Sample

A total of 100 (61.0%) females and 64 (39.0%) males agreed to participate in completing the Cohort (In-Program) Questionnaire (Table A-1). The mean for age in this 164 respondent sample was 28.0 years, the median was 25.0 years, and the mode was 19.0 years. Table A-2 indicates that the largest sub-group represented was between 16 - 24 years (n=67, 47.5%), with the next largest group of 42 (29.8%) cases falling within the 25 - 34 year range. Of those comprising the 35 - 64 years of age range, 24 (17.0%) were between 35 - 44 years, 7 (5.0%) were 45 - 54 years, and 1 (0.7%) was in the 55 - 64 year range. Twenty-three (14.0%) respondents did not specify their age.

Of 164 total respondents, 101 (61.6%) had never married, 27 (16.5%) were currently married, 25 (15.2%) had been separated or divorced, 7 (4.3%) were widowed, and 4 (2.4%) were in some sort of common-law living arrangement (Table A-3). A smaller sample of 47 (34.7%) respondents revealed their number of dependents, as indicated in Table A-4. Twenty-three (48.9%) had one dependent, 8 (17.0%) had two dependents, 12 (28.5%) had three dependents, and 4 had four or more dependents on their income.

Of 160 respondents who indicated their highest level of formal education, 99 (61.9%) had reached the secondary (grade 9 - 13) level, 24 (15.0%) had reached post-secondary studies, and 18 (11.2%) had experienced a vocational/technical school setting (Table A-5).

English was the predominant language spoken at home with 120 (83.3%) of the total sample cases. Twelve (8.3%) were classified as 'Other European', 6 (4.2%) were Asian, and 5 (3.5%) were Middle Eastern (Table A-6).

2.2 Work History/Status

As indicated in Table A-7, one week before the program started, 69 (42.9%) respondents had identified social assistance as their source of income. Forty-eight of that sample indicated their length of time on social assistance. Of these, 30 (62.5%) had been receiving benefits for greater than one year, and 18 (37.5%) were in receipt of benefits for less than one year (Table A-8).

Of the remaining 94 respondents who were not on social assistance, 19 (11.8%) had been employed full or part-time, 17 (10.6%) were receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits, 17 (10.6%) had income through a significant other (e.g., parents), 13 (8.1.%) had no source of income and 26 (16.0%) were receiving some other benefit a pension (Table A-7).

2.3 Barriers to Employment

Table A-9 illustrates that 98 respondents had experienced some sort of critical life incident over the six months prior to beginning a program. Fifty-five (56.1%) of these respondents had had a positive life event and 39 (39.8%) had experienced a negative event. A total of 59 (60.8%) respondents had dealt with two or more critically affected life areas and 38 (39.2%) had only one critical life incident (Table A-9b).

Cross tabulation identified areas most affected, either positively or negatively which included: employment, family, income, education and free time/leisure. Most notable of the areas affected was education, with 31 (31.6%) cases experiencing a positive incident and 6 (6.1%) a negative incident. Family-related incidents were also more frequent with 22 (22.45%) positive and 15 (15.3%) negative incidents (Table A-9c). Table A-9c also indicates that income was a third cross tabulation of note, with 17 (17.35%) positively affected respondents and 15 (15.3%) negative experiences. Job-related incidents also comprised 19 (19.4%) positive and 12 (12.25%) negative experiences. In terms of free time/leisure, 17 (17.35%) had had a positive incident while 12 (12.25%) respondents experienced a negative incident.

2.4 Client/Program Expectations

One hundred and sixty-three respondents indicated the program in which they were registered at point of survey. Sixty-five (39.9%) were in Futures (i.e., Futures - Y.E.C. or Futures - Mohawk, 28 (17.2%) in Focus on Skills, 27 (16.6%) in Basic Job Readiness Training, 25 (15.3%) in Ontario Basic Skills, 12 (7.4%) in other programs (e.g., Lonar/W.A.P.) and 6 (3.7%) in Women in Trades and Technology (Table A-10).

Table A-11 provides a breakdown of source of client counselling prior to program participation. Of 160 program clients responding, 112 (70.0%) noted that they had been recently counselled on job searches and related individual employment strategies. Forty-eight (30.0%) had not received any counselling.

A total of 77 (68.8%) who had been counselled received advice from a specific program counsellor. Fourteen (12.5%) had received counselling from a Canada Employment Centre Counsellor, while 10 (8.9%) had been advised by a counsellor at a community-based agency (e.g., Youth Employment Centre, Hamilton Help Centre). Only 3 (2.7%) study respondents had been counselled by a Regional Social Service Worker.

One hundred and sixty-three program clients specified what they expected to achieve through involvement in their respective programs. Table A-12 indicates the response categories in order of most frequent response.

The most frequent categories included: gain confidence, 108 (66.3%); learn new job skills, 107 (65.6%); a chance to train on the job, 106 (65.0%); upgrading school courses, 99 (60.7%); career planning, 92 (56.4%); get paid while training, 89 (54.6%); and resume writing, 86 (52.8%).

2.5 Preferred Learning Environment

Tables A-13a to A-13e provide a breakdown of program respondents according to preferred aspects of a learning environment. One hundred and three (64.4%) preferred that the number of people in the learning situation should be less than or equal to ten persons. Individuals would also learn best in either a classroom or a job-like setting, as noted respectively by 58 (36.25%) and 55 (34.4%) respondents.

Eighty-five (53.1%) preferred that classes be held every day from Monday to Friday. Although there was no preferred age specified for participants, as indicated by 98 (61.25%) respondents, 51 (31.9%) did prefer that cohorts were approximately their same age.

2.6 Need for Achievement Scores

Table A-14 provides a frequency distribution for total scores or a standardized Need for Achievement Scale. A total of 141 respondents completed this sub-scale.

The mean score, rounded off was 13.0 of a possible 24.0 value points. The range was 5.0 - 20.0 points, with a midpoint of 12.5 and a mode of 16.0 points. Twenty-eight (19.9%) respondents fell within the 16.0 weighted value scoring range. A total of 15 (17.0%) fell below the midpoint (12.5) and 126 (83.0%) scored above the midpoint.

3.0 TABLES

TABLE A-1: SEX OF RESPONDENT

	Frequency	%
Male	64	39.0
Female	100	61.0
Total	164	100.0

TABLE A-2: AGE OF RESPONDENT

	Frequency	%
16 - 24 Years	67	47.5
25 - 34 Years	42	29.8
35 - 44 Years	24	17.0
45 - 54 Years	7	5.0
55 - 64 Years	1	0.7
Total	141	100.0

TABLE A-3: MARITAL STATUS

	Frequency	%
Single	101	61.6
Currently Married	27	16.5
Separated/Divorced	25	15.2
Widowed	7	4.3
Common-Law	4	2.4
Total	164	100.0

TABLE A-4: NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

	Frequency	%
1	23	48.9
2	8	17.0
3	12	25.5
4 or more	4	8.6
Total	47	100.0

TABLE A-5: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

	Frequency	%
Elementary (K - 8)	24	15.0
Secondary (9 - 13)	99	61.9
College	9	5.6
Vocational School	17	10.6
University	10	6.3
Other	1	0.6
Total	160	100.0

TABLE A-6: LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

	Frequency	%
English	120	83.3
Asian	6	4.2
Spanish/Portuguese	5	3.5
Middle Eastern	5	3.5
Italian	4	2.8
Eastern European	3	2.1
French	1	0.7
Total	144	100.0

TABLE A-7: SOURCE OF INCOME

	Frequency	%
Social Assistance	69	42.9
Employed (Full or Part-Time)	19	11.8
Unemployment Insurance	17	10.6
Significant Other	17	10.6
No Income	13	8.1
Miscellaneous Other	3	84.0
Benefits and/or Payments	26	16.0
Total	161	100.0

TABLE A-8: LENGTH OF TIME ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

	Frequency	%
1 - 2 Months	2	4.2
3 - 4 Months	6	12.5
5 - 6 Months	2	4.2
7 - 11 Months	8	16.6
1 Year or More	30	62.5
Total	48	100.0

TABLE A-9A: CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENTS

	Frequency	%
Positive Life Event	55	56.1
Negative Life Event	39	39.8
Not Specified	4	4.1
Total	98	100.0

TABLE A-9B: NUMBER OF LIFE AREAS AFFECTED BY CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENT

	Frequency	%
1	38	39.2
2	22	22.7
3	17	17.5
4 or More	20	20.6
Total	97	100.0

TABLE A-9C: TYPE OF CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENT BY LIFE AREAS AFFECTED (N=98)*

	Positive Incident		Negative Incident	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Family	22	22.5	15	15.3
Income	17	17.4	15	15.3
Education	31	31.6	6	6.1
Free Time/Leisure	17	17.4	12	12.3
Employment	19	19.4	12	12.3
Total	106	--	60	--

* Multiple Responses Permitted

TABLE A-10: PARTICIPANT DISTRIBUTION BY PROGRAM

	Frequency	%
Futures	65	39.9
Focus on Skills	38	17.2
Basic Job Readiness Training	27	16.6
Ontario Basic Skills	25	15.3
Other Programs (e.g, T.H.A.T.)	12	7.4
Women into Trades and Technology	6	3.7
Total	163	100.0

TABLE A-11: SOURCE OF CLIENT COUNSELLING PRIOR TO PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

	Frequency	%
Program Counsellor	77	68.8
C.E.C. Counsellor	14	12.5
Significant Other	8	7.1
Social Services Case Worker	3	2.7
Placement Employer	1	0.9
Not Specified	9	8.0
Total	112	100.0

TABLE A-12: PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS OF PROGRAM (N=163)*

	Frequency	%
Increase Confidence	108	66.3
Learn New Job Skills	107	65.6
Chance to Train on the Job	106	65.0
Upgrading School Courses	99	60.7
Find Work Immediately Following Program	97	59.5
Career Planning	92	56.4
Receive Allowance While Training	89	54.6
Learn to Write a Resume	86	52.8
Learn New Life Skills	61	37.4
Train in a Non-Traditional Area	58	35.6
Receive Follow-Up Counselling	39	23.9
Total	943	--

* Multiple Responses Permitted

APPENDIX B

COHORT (FOLLOW-UP) QUESTIONNAIRE

1.0 Covering Letter and Questionnaire

2.0 Discussion

3.0 Tables

B-1

The Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton and District

155 James St. S., 6th Floor, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 3A4 Telephone: 522-1148

October 4, 1988.

Dear Participant:

A few months have past since the spring of 1988, when you completed a written survey as part of our study on employment training programs. This survey, called the Job Training Program Participant Questionnaire, asked you to comment on your feelings about work and what you expected to achieve from the program in which you were participating. You were asked to fill in the survey and either hand it back to your program instructor or mail it to the Social Planning and Research Council in a business reply envelope. Your co-operation in filling in this questionnaire was very helpful and useful for our study results.

Now that you have finished your involvement or have been in the program for a while, we would once again appreciate your feedback on how things are going for you and whether or not the program was helpful to you. We want to know if these programs are actually helping you in finding a job or career. Of course, your participation in this second survey is totally voluntary.

Please read and answer the questions on the following two pages. When you are done, please put the survey in the enclosed envelope and drop it in any mailbox before October 19, 1988. No stamps are needed.

Your name does not go on the survey anywhere. This survey will remain strictly confidential and will be destroyed once the study has been completed.

My name is Caroline Ball and I work at the Social Planning and Research Council. If you have any questions, please call me at 522-1148.

Thanks, in advance, for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Ball

Caroline Ball, M.H.K.,
Research Associate.

CB/ms

A United Way Member Agency

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING - FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN COMPLETING AND RETURNING THIS SURVEY - PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OUTLINED AND COMPLETE EVERY QUESTION AS REQUIRED.

Please answer the following questions by either filling in the blank lines or placing a check ☑ in the most correct box(es):

1a) What is the name of the most recent employment training program which you have attended?

☐ Focus on Skills
☐ Futures
☐ Ontario Basic Skills
☐ Basic Job Readiness Training
☐ Women in Trades and Technology
☐ Basic Employment Training
☐ Basic Training & Skills Development
☐ Other ____________________

b) When did you start this program? ____________ Month 19______ Year

c) Have you completed this program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when?

____________ Month 19______ Year

2a) Since beginning/leaving this program, have you:

a) Worked full-time	☐ Yes	☐ No
b) Worked part-time	☐ Yes	☐ No
c) Not worked	☐ Yes	☐ No
d) Participated in another form of training (e.g., English or Math upgrading)	☐ Yes	☐ No

b) If you have worked, did this work involve the use of any skills you learned through this program?

☐ Yes ☐ No OR ☐ I have not worked since the program.

Please describe: ____

____

3a) Which of the following is a source of income for you right now?

☐ Wages/Salary
☐ Family Allowance/Baby Bonus
☐ Unemployment Insurance
☐ Worker's Compensation
☐ Pension (Government or Other)
☐ General Welfare Assistance
☐ Family Benefits Allowance

b) How many people including yourself, depend on your income?

☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four or more

c) How long has it been since you last worked for wages or salary?

____________ Month 19______ Year

d) If you are now receiving General Welfare Assistance of Family Benefits Allowance, when did you start receiving benefits?

____________ Day ____________ Month 19______

4a) In the past, which of the following do you feel may have stopped you from working?

☐ Age
☐ Sex
☐ Education
☐ Job experience
☐ Other (Describe) ____________________
☐ Skill level
☐ Dependents (e.g. children, parents)
☐ Health
☐ Legal problems

b) Do you feel that your recent training program helped you to overcome this problem? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please comment: ______________________________

____

____

5a) In the last 6 months, have any events seriously affected your life?

☐ Yes ☐ No (If no, go to Question 6)

b) Was this a positive or negative event?

☐ Positive ☐ Negative

c) Which areas(s) of your life did this affect?

☐ Marriage/Partnership
☐ Family
☐ Income
☐ Employment
☐ Other (Describe) ______________________________
☐ Housing situation
☐ Health
☐ Free time/Leisure
☐ Education

6) Which of the following do you feel you achieved or received from the employment training programs in which you were involved?

☐ Learning new job-related skills
☐ A chance to train on-the-job
☐ Upgrading or improving my school courses
☐ Learning daily life skills (e.g., good health, finances etc)
☐ Learning English as a second language
☐ Learning and practising job search skills
☐ A chance to train in a non-traditional job area
☐ An opportunity to feel more confident and good about myself

7) Now that you have been involved in an employment training program, please comment on the following:

a) The number of people I like around me when I am learning is:

☐ No-one, by myself
☐ In a large group, more than 10 people
☐ In a small group, less than 10 people

b) I learn best:

☐ In a classroom
☐ In a job-like setting
☐ At home
☐ In a large auditorium
☐ In an informal setting, like a cafeteria

c) I prefer courses where classes are offered:

☐ Once a week
☐ 2-3 times a week
☐ No preference
☐ Everyday, Monday to Friday
☐ On weekends

d) I prefer courses where others in the class are:

☐ Older than me
☐ My own age
☐ No preference
☐ Younger than me
☐ All ages

Please answer the following by writing in tne blank spaces provided.

8. What is your year of birth? 19__________

9. What language do you speak at home? ______________________________

Today's Date ______________________________

If you have finished, please fold the survey and return it in the envelope provided by dropping it in any mailbox before October 19, 1988. Note: A postage stamp is not required.

Thanks again for your help.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 Client Status: Post-Program

A total of 57 respondents were included in the Cohort (follow-up) sample. This comprised 34.8% of the original n=164 respondent Cohort (in-program) sample.

Table B-1 indicates the length of time spent in an employment training program by individuals. Twenty-four of fifty-six (42.8%) had been in a program for less than or equal to six months, fourteen (25.0%) had spent between six months and a year in a program, and one (1.8%) had been involved for up to 1.5 years. Seventeen (30.4%) respondents were still involved in a program at point of survey.

As noted in Table B-2, 25/57 (43.9%) respondents were working full-time at point of survey, 10/57 (17.5%) were working part-time and 18/57 (31.6%) were not actively working. An additional 4/57 (7.0%) did not specify their work status.

A total of 13/57 (22.8%) respondents indicated that they had started attending another training program since first responding to the Cohort (in-program) questionnaire (Table B-3).

Only 19/56 (34.0%) respondents indicated which skills they had used after leaving a training program. Of these, 15/19 (79.0%) noted they had used job-related skills, including: technical skills, communication, job search, computer training and office skills. Another 4/19 (21.0%) had utilized personal skills relating to self-esteem and other life skills (Table B-4).

2.2 Perceived Effectiveness of Programs

Of 55 respondents, 38 (69.1%) said their respective training programs effectively met their needs as a trainee. The remaining 17/55 (30.9%) did not find programs to be effective (Table B-5).

Table B-6 provides an overview of program areas stated by respondents as being helpful in preparing them for entry or re-entry into the workforce. By far, the area of greatest satisfaction was a perceived increase in self-confidence, with 14/39 (36.8%) respondents. Access to jobs via on the job placements was another area of note, with 8/39 (21.1%) respondents. Other areas of effectiveness included: academic upgrading, ability to deal with legal barriers, a more realistic outlook on employment, better job search skills and improved technical skills.

2.3 Critical Life Incidents

A total of 26/51 (51.0%) respondents had experienced some sort of critical life incident since either beginning or leaving their respective programs (Table B-7).

As Table B-8 illustrates this sub-group of n=26 respondents indicated they had experienced a broad range of both positive and negative life events since first responding to the Cohort (in-program) questionnaire. Education, with 15/26 (57.7%) respondents was the largest response category. A total of 12/26 (46.2%) indicated employment and 9/26 (34.6%) indicated income as areas effected. Family-related incidents had 8/26 (30.8%) respondents, health had 6/26 (23.1%), leisure time had 5/26 (19.2%) and housing had 4/26 (15.4%). Multiple responses were permitted.

3.0 Tables

TABLE B-1: LENGTH OF TIME IN PROGRAM (POST-PROGRAM)

	Frequency	%
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	24	42.8
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	14	25.0
>1 Year, ≤1.5 Years	1	1.8
Have not completed	17	30.4
Total	56	100.0

TABLE B-2: WORK STATUS (POST-PROGRAM)

	Frequency	%
Working Full-Time	25	43.9
Working Part-Time	10	17.5
Not Working	18	31.6
Not Specified	4	7.0
Total	57	100.0

TABLE B-3: ATTENDANCE IN ANOTHER PROGRAM

	Frequency	%
Yes	13	22.8
No	11	19.3
Not Specified	33	57.9
Total	57	100.0

TABLE B-4: SKILLS USED AFTER PROGRAMS (N=19)*

	Frequency	%
Job Search	3	15.0
Communication	4	20.0
Computer Training	1	5.0
Placement	5	25.0
Self-Esteem	2	10.0
Office Skills	1	5.0
Life Skills	2	10.0
Technical Skills	1	5.0
Total	19	100.0

TABLE B-5: PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS

	Frequency	%
Yes	38	69.1
No	17	30.9
Total	55	100.0

TABLE B-6: AREAS OF EFFECTIVENESS

	Frequency	%
Self Confidence	14	36.8
Upgrading	3	7.9
Able to deal with legal barrier	1	2.6
Access to jobs via placement	8	21.1
Realistic Outlook	1	2.6
Job Search Skills	2	5.3
Improved Skills	2	5.3
Self Esteem	1	2.6
Not Specified	7	18.4
Total	39	100.0

TABLE B-7: CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENT (SINCE BEGINNING/LEAVING PROGRAM)

	Frequency	%
Yes	26	51.0
No	25	49.0
Total	51	100.0

TABLE B-8: AREAS MOST AFFECTED BY A CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENT (POST-PROGRAM) (N=26)*

	Frequency	%
Employment	12	46.2
Education	15	57.7
Income	9	34.6
Family	8	30.8
Health	6	23.1
Leisure Time	5	19.2
Housing	4	15.4
Total	59	—

* Multiple responses permitted

APPENDIX C

POINT IN TIME QUESTIONNAIRE

1.0 Covering Letter and Questionnaire

2.0 Discussion

3.0 Tables

The Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton and District
155 James St. S., 6th Floor, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 3A4 Telephone: 522-1148

C-1

September 6, 1988.

Dear Participant:

Your help is needed in filling out this survey. We are looking at how employment training programs work for men and women on welfare. We want to understand what your needs are and what have been your problems.

Please read and answer the questions on the following pages. When you are done, please put the survey in the enclosed envelope and drop it in any mailbox before September 26, 1988. No stamps are needed.

Your name does not go on the survey anywhere. No one will know how you answered, not even your welfare worker.

My name is Caroline Ball and I work at the Social Planning and Research Council. If you have any questions or do not understand something, please call me at 522-1148.

Thanks very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Caroline Ball

Caroline Ball, M.H.K.,
Research Associate.

CB/ms

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING SURVEY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN COMPLETING AND RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE - PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH SECTION AND COMPLETE EVERY QUESTION AS REQUIRED.

Please check [✓] the most correct answer for the following:

1. Your sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Marital status:
- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other (Describe) ____________________

3. How many people depend on your income?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or more

4. Are you now receiving social assistance (General Welfare Benefits or Family Benefits Allowance)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please answer the following by writing the correct number in the blank spaces provided.

5. When did you start receiving your present benefits?

________ Day ________ Month 19____ Year

6a) How long has it been since you last worked for wages or a salary?

[ ] days [ ] weeks [ ] months [ ] years

OR ☐ I am working now. (Go to question 7)

b) How long did this employment last?

[ ] days [ ] weeks [ ] months [ ] years

Please answer the following by placing a check [✓] in the most correct box(es).

7a) How important to you is the need to work at some sort of a job?

☐ Very Important ☐ Sometimes Important ☐ Not always Important ☐ Not at all Important

b) Are wages or a salary important to your work? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. In the past, which of the following do you feel may have stopped you from working at a job:
- ☐ Age
- ☐ Sex
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Job Experience
- ☐ Skill Level
- ☐ Other Dependents (Example: Young Children)
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Legal Problems
- ☐ Other (Describe) ____________________

9a) In the past year (1987-88) have you been involved in any job or employment training programs?

☐ Yes ☐ No (If No, go to Question 12a)

b) If Yes, which ones?
- ☐ Futures
- ☐ Ontario Basic Skills
- ☐ Basic Job Readiness Training
- ☐ Focus on Skills
- ☐ Women in Trades and Technology
- ☐ Basic Employment Training
- ☐ Basic Training and Skills Development
- ☐ Other____________________

c) When did you complete this program?

☐ Less than one month ago
☐ 2 - 3 months ago
☐ 4 - 6 months ago
☐ 7 - 9 months ago
☐ 10 -12 months ago
☐ Did not complete the program

d) Were you receiving GWA or FBA Benefits before starting this program?

☐ Yes ☐ No. If Yes, which one? ☐ GWA
☐ FBA

10a) Who first helped you to decide about participating in this Training Program?

☐ My caseworker at the Income Maintenance Office
☐ A counsellor at the Canada Employment Centre
☐ A counsellor from the program itself
☐ A counsellor from the Youth Employment Centre/Citizen Action Group
☐ Myself
☐ Other (Please describe) ____________________

b) Did you find this job training program helpful? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: ____________________

____

____

11. Since completing/leaving your job training program have you:

a) Worked full-time ☐ Yes ☐ No
b) Worked part-time ☐ Yes ☐ No
c) Not worked ☐ Yes ☐ No
d) Participated in another job training program ☐ Yes ☐ No

12a) Since you left the program or began receiving GWA/FBA Benefits, have any events seriously affected your life?

☐ Yes ☐ No. (If No, go to Question 13)

b) Was this a positive or negative event? ☐ Positive ☐ Negative

c) Which areas of your life did this affect?

☐ Marriage/Partnership
☐ Family
☐ Income
☐ Employment
☐ Housing situation
☐ Health
☐ Free time/Leisure
☐ Education
☐ Other (Please describe) ____________________

d) Were these events the reason why you applied for your current GWA/FBA Benefits?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: ____________________

____

____

Please answer the following by writing in the blank spaces provided

13. What is your year of birth? ________ Day ________ Month 19____ Year

14. What language do you speak at home? ____________________

To-Day's Date: ____________________

If you have finished, please fold the survey and return it in the envelope provided by dropping it in any mailbox before September 26th. Note, a stamp is not required.

Thanks again for your help.

2.0 DISCUSSION

2.1 Profile of Sample

Of a total of 112 respondents, 77 (70.6%) males and 32 (29.4%) females comprised the point in time sample. Three respondents did not specify their sex (Table C-1).

The mean age for the sample was 31.3 years. The largest single age group, 25 - 34 years, had 35 (32.7%) cases, with individuals between 16 - 24 years making up the second group of 31 (29.0%) cases. The remaining 38 (38.3%) cases fell within the 'older worker' range between 35 - 64 years of age (Table C-2).

Table C-3 indicates that fifty-eight (51.8%) of 112 cases reported were never married, while 26 (23.2%) were currently married and 23 (20.5%) were either separated or divorced. The remaining 5 (4.5%) respondents were either widowed or living as part of a common-law arrangement.

Table C-4 illustrates that, of 102 respondents indicating dependent status, 70 (68.6%) had only one dependent, 10 (9.8%) had two dependents, 8 (7.8%) had three dependents, and 14 (13.7%) had four or more. None of the respondents did not have at least one dependent.

English was the largest group identified for language spoken at home with 88 (80.0%) respondents. A much smaller preparation of Asian (8.2%), Eastern European (5.4%), Spanish (3.6%), and French (2.7%) also responded (Table C-5).

2.2 Work History/Status

Of 112 respondents, only 23 (20.5%) had been involved in some part or full-time work since either beginning social assistance benefits or leaving an employment training program (Table C-6). The remaining 89 (79.5%) had been on social assistance an average of 40.9 weeks by point of survey. The largest respondent group of 39 (43.8%) had been on benefits for greater than one month, but less than or equal to six months. Twenty-one (23.6%) had been on social assistance for more than one year while 14 (15.7%) had only been receiving benefits for between 2 - 4 weeks (Table C-7).

Table C-8 shows that only 58 (51.8%) of all respondents noted when they had last worked for wages of some sort. The average length of time away from work was 64 weeks (Corbett, 1981 notes that an individual may be considered to be 'long-term unemployed' if unemployed for more than six months, or 24 weeks). Fifty-one (45.5%) clients also indicated that their average length of previous or last employment was 61.6 weeks. The largest sub-group of 22 (43.1%) responded that they had only worked between one and six months during their last job experience (Table C-9).

2.3 Barriers to Employment

Of 108 respondents, 45 (41.7%) indicated 'job experience' as the major barrier for their employment opportunities, 32 (28.6%) felt that 'education' was a barrier, 32 (28.6%) also noted 'acquired skill levels' as an impediment, 25 (23.1%) stated 'health' as a barrier and 18 (14.7%) said their 'age' was a major barrier to employment (Table C-10a).

Forty-two (44.7%) of 94 respondents had been involved in some sort of 'critical life incident' since initiating social assistance benefits and/or leaving an employment training program to return to benefits.

Areas identified as most affected, either positively or negatively, over the preceding year were: income, employment, housing and health respectively. Further cross-tabulation also suggests that 13 (31.0%) had been negatively affected with regard to income, while 5 (11.9%) had a positive experience. Nine (21.4%) had experienced a negative employment incident, with 4 (9.5%) positive. To a lesser extent, housing was an area positively identified for 3 (7.1%) social assistance clients and negatively affected for 6 (14.3%). Similarly, health was indicated as negatively affected 7 (16.7%) times, while only 2 (4.8%) cases had had a positive health experience (Table C-10b).

Interestingly, a total of 30 (71.4%) of the 42 respondents to this section also acknowledged that these events may have been precipitators for their return to or application for social assistance benefits. Eleven (26.2%) said these events had no bearing on their current income arrangement, and 1 (2.4%) did not specify.

2.4 Employment Training Referral

Thirty-two (28.8%) of a total of 111 respondents noted they had been involved in an employment training program within the past year (1988). Programs identified included: Basic Job Readiness Training, Futures, Basic Employment Training, Ontario Basic Skills, Focus on Skills, Basic Training and Skill Development, Co-op Education, English as a Second Language and Women into Trades and Technology (Table C-11a).

Table C-11b shows that 9(28.1%) of n=32 respondents had not completed a program, once involved, 13 (40.6%) had completed a program in the last six months, and 8 (25.0%) had completed within the last year. Eighteen (56.2%) had been receiving General Welfare Assistance prior to their program involvement, while the remaining 14 (43.8%) had no previous Income Maintenance Department file.

As indicated in Table C-12, when asked who had helped each of the 32 trainees to decide on an employment training program, 12 (37.5%) had been "self-counselled", 7 (21.9%) had been counselled by their Regional Social Service Worker, 5 (15.7%) had referred to a specific program counsellor, 3 (9.4%) had spoken with a C.E.C. counsellor and 5 (15.7%) had referred to other sources of information, such as program brochures and advertisements.

Twenty (62.5%) of n=32 former program participants related that they had found their respective programs to be helpful. Eight (25.0%) were not satisfied with their program participation and 4 (12.5%) did not specify their level of satisfaction.

Those who found their programs helpful noted that they were effective for: providing skills for job search upgrading, confidence building, language development, and "making better connections via referrals". Clients who were not satisfied cited reasons such as: "did not help to overcome stigma of criminal record", or little help from coaches/instructors as detractors from program effectiveness.

3.0 TABLES

TABLE C-1: SEX OF RESPONDENT

	Frequency	%
Male	77	70.6
Female	32	29.4
Total	110	100.0

TABLE C-2: AGE OF RESPONDENT

Age (Years)	Frequency	%
16 - 24	31	29.0
25 - 34	35	32.7
35 - 44	26	24.3
45 - 55	11	10.3
56 - 64	1	0.9
Other	3	2.8
Total	107	100.0

TABLE C-3: MARITAL STATUS

	Frequency	%
Single	58	51.8
Married	26	23.2
Separated	11	9.8
Divorced	12	10.7
Widowed	2	1.8
Common-law	3	2.7
Total	112	100.0

TABLE C-4: NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

	Frequency	%
1	70	68.6
2	10	9.8
3	8	7.8
4 or more	14	13.7
Total	102	100.0

TABLE C-5: LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

	Frequency	%
English	88	80.0
French	3	2.7
Spanish/Portuguese	4	3.6
German	2	1.8
Eastern European	4	3.6
Asian	9	8.2
Total	110	100.0

TABLE C-6: RESPONDENTS AS CURRENT SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS (G.W.A/F.B.A.)

	Frequency	%
G.W.A./F.B.A. Recipients	89	79.5
Non-Recipients	23	20.5
Total	112	100.0

TABLE C-7: LENGTH OF TIME ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

	Frequency	%
≤1 Week	1	1.1
>1 Week, ≤1 Month	14	15.7
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	39	43.8
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	11	12.4
>1 Year, ≤1.5 Years	8	9.0
>1.5 Years, ≤2 Years	4	4.5
>2 Years	9	10.1
Not Specified	3	3.3
Total	89	100.0

TABLE C-8: WHEN LAST WORKED FOR WAGES

	Frequency	%
2 - 4 Years	5	5.7
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	28	31.8
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	12	13.6
>1 Year, ≤1.5 Years	5	5.7
>1.5 Years, ≤2 Years	2	2.3
>2 Years	6	6.8
Not Specified	30	34.1
Total	88	100.0

Mean = 64.2 Median = 18.0 Mode = 8.0

TABLE C-9: LENGTH OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

	Frequency	%
≤1 Week	4	5.7
>1 Week, ≤1 Month	5	7.1
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	22	31.4
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	10	14.3
>1.5 Years, ≤2 Years	3	4.3
>2 Years	7	10.0
Not Specified	19	27.2
Total	70	100.0

Mean = 61.6 Median = 16.0 Mode = 12.0

TABLE C-10A: CLIENT-PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT (n=108)

	Frequency	%
Inadequate Job Experience	45	41.7
Level of Education	32	28.6
Skill Level	32	28.6
Health	25	23.1
Age	18	14.7
Legal Problems	14	13.0
Dependents	5	4.6
Sex	3	2.8
Miscellaneous	6	5.6
Total	108	-

TABLE C-10B: TYPE OF CRITICAL LIFE INCIDENT BY LIFE AREAS AFFECTED (N=42)*

	Positive Incident		Negative Incident	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Income	5	11.9	13	31.0
Employment	4	9.5	9	21.4
Housing	3	7.1	6	14.3
Health	2	4.8	7	16.7
Total	14	—	35	—

* Multiple Response Permitted

TABLE C-11A: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS IN EMPLOYMENT TRAINING DURING LAST YEAR BY PROGRAM NAME (n=111)

	Frequency	%
Basic Job Readiness Training	8	25.0
Futures	5	15.6
Basic Employment Training	5	15.6
Ontario Basic Skills	4	12.5
Focus on Skills	3	9.4
Basic Training and Skill Development	3	9.4
Co-op Education	2	6.3
English as Second Language	1	3.1
Women into Trades and Technology	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

TABLE C-11B: PERIOD SINCE PROGRAM COMPLETION (n=32)

	Frequency	%
Less Than 1 Month	4	12.5
2 - 3 Months	4	12.5
4 - 6 Months	5	15.6
7 - 9 Months	4	12.5
10 - 12 Months	4	12.5
Did Not Complete	9	28.1
Not Specified	2	6.3
Total	32	100.0

TABLE C-12: MODE OF REFERRAL TO PROGRAM (n=32)

	Frequency	%
Self Referral/Initiated	12	37.5
Regional Caseworker	7	21.9
Program Counsellor	5	15.6
Other Agencies	5	15.6
C.E.C. Counsellor	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0

APPENDIX D

NON-RESPONDENT SAMPLE PROFILE

1.0 Discussion

2.0 Tables

1.0 DISCUSSION

1.1 Profile of Non-Respondent Sample

A total of 29 randomly selected non-respondents to either the Point in Time or Cohort (Parts I and II) questionnaire were researched through investigation of case files at the Regional Social Services Income Maintenance Department.

Table D-1 indicates that 13 (44.8%) of the sample were male and 16 (55.2%) were females. Ages ranged from 16 to 54 years; the most frequent range being the 25 - 34 year old group, with 13 (44.8%) cases. A total of 23 (79.3%) cases fell below age 34 while 6 (20.7%) comprised the 35 year and older client group (Table D-2).

As illustrated in Table D-3, 12 (41.4%) clients had never been married, while 10 (34.5%) were separated or divorced, and 2 (6.9%) were widowed. Only 5 (17.2%) were married or involved in a common-law arrangement. Regardless of marital status, 15 (51.7%) non-respondents had no dependents on their income, 8 (27.6%) had one dependent and 6 (20.6%) had between two to four dependents (Table D-4).

Levels of formal education attained by non-respondents did not go above or beyond the secondary level (i.e., Grade 12), ranging from Grade 8 to Grade 12 inclusive. The average (mean) level of formal education was Grade 10, although the greatest single frequency (mode) was evenly distributed between Grades 9, 10 and 12 with 7 (26.9%) cases per grade (Table D-5).

1.2 Work History/Status

Using weeks as a measure, length of time on social assistance ranged from less than one week in receipt of benefits to greater than two years (Table D-6). The mean number of weeks on benefits was 38.65 weeks (9.5 months), indicating that a large percentage of non-respondents could be classified as 'long-term unemployed'. The greatest frequency (mode) for length of time on social assistance was 14 (48.3%) clients who had been in receipt of benefits for greater than one month, but less than six months.

Numerous reasons were given regarding the receipt of G.W.A. benefits. Responses most often stated included: 6 (20.7%), separated from spouse; 4 (13.8%), quit job or laid-off from work; and 4 (13.8%) were pending a first pay.

Table D-7 illustrates the number of weeks since last worked reported by n=20 non-respondents. Twelve (60.0%) had been off work from 1 -2 years, 5 (25.0%) had not worked in over two years, and 3 (15.0%) had been unemployed for less than one year.

2.0 TABLES

TABLE D-1: SEX OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	%
Male	13	44.8
Female	16	55.2
Total	29	100.0

TABLE D-2: AGE OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	%
16 - 24 Years	10	34.5
25 - 34 Years	13	44.8
35 - 44 Years	5	17.2
45 - 54 Years	1	3.4
Total	29	100.0

TABLE D-3: MARITAL STATUS

	Frequency	%
Single	12	41.4
Married	3	10.3
Separated/Divorced	10	34.5
Widowed	2	6.9
Common-Law	2	6.9
Total	29	100.0

TABLE D-4: NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS (n=29)

	Frequency	%
0	15	51.7
1	8	27.6
2	4	13.8
3	1	3.4
4	1	3.4
Total	29	100.0

TABLE D-5: HIGHEST FORMAL EDUCATION

	Frequency	%
Grade 8	2	7.7
Grade 9	7	26.9
Grade 10	7	26.9
Grade 11	3	11.5
Grade 12	7	26.9
Total	26	100.0

TABLE D-6: LENGTH OF TIME ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

	Frequency	%
≤1 Week	3	10.3
>1 Week, ≤1 Month	2	6.9
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	14	48.3
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	3	10.3
>1 Year, ≤1.5 Years	4	13.8
>1.5 Years, ≤2 Years	1	3.4
>2 Years	2	6.9
Total	29	100.0

TABLE D-7: WHEN LAST WORKED FOR WAGES

	Frequency	%
>1 Month, ≤6 Months	2	10.0
>6 Months, ≤1 Year	1	5.0
>1 Year, ≤1.5 Years	6	30.0
>1.5 Years, ≤2 Years	6	30.0
>2 Years	5	25.0
Total	20	100.0

APPENDIX E

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1.0 Interview Schedule
2.0 Discussion
3.0 Tables

KEY INFORMANT PROFILE FORM

INTRODUCTION

[Interviewer] Before starting the main body of this interview, I would first like to ask some questions regarding your position with (Regional Social Services/CEIC/Job Training Programme).

---

1. Your name is ____

2. What is your official job title? ____________________________

3. How long have you been in this job? _____ years _____ months

4. What does your position involve insofar as duties and responsibilities?

____

____

____

____

____

5. Could you please list any academic and/or professional credentials which you have attained?

____

____

____

THANK YOU

Now I would like to ask you some questions about your knowledge and understanding of the job training programme(s).

1. Could you briefly describe the following as they relate to the programme(s) in which you are involved or to which you refer clients:*

   a) the purpose of the programme(s)

   b) the target group(s) serviced by the programme(s)

*NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: If informant is from Regional Social Services or CEIC, account for all programs by filling in each box according to program title.

FUTURES

a) Purposes -

b) Target Groups -

c) Program Content -

ONTARIO BASIC SKILLS

a)

b)

c)

WOMEN INTO TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY

a)

b)

c)

BASIC JOB READINESS TRAINING

a)

b)

c)

JOB ENTRY PROGRAMME (CAG)

a)

b)

c)

FOCUS ON SKILLS

a)

b)

c)

Now I am going to ask you some questions regarding GWA clients.

2. a) [If Income Maintenance caseworker] What is your current month end caseload of GWA recipients? ____________

   b) [If CEIC counsellor] How many GWA recipients have you had initial contact ________, ongoing contact ________ with this month?

   c) [If program staff] How many GWA recipients have been referred to you this month? ________

      What percentage were referred through CEIC? ________%

      What percentage were referred directly by an Income Maintenance worker at R.S.S.? ________%

      What percentage were referred through another source? ________%
      Please specify __________________________

3. How many of these clients have been assessed as eligible to begin a job training programme? ________

4. a) Of your current GWA caseload, how many are actively involved in a job training programme? ________

   b) How many have started a job training programme but have dropped out in the last month? ________ Any time? ________

   c) What were some of their reasons for leaving?

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   d) How many are pursuing additional job training or other employability initiatives? ________

5. In general, how realistic do you feel GWA clients are with regard to:

   a) their personal expectations of their own lives?

   b) their personal expectations of job training programmes?

I would now like to discuss the programme/client selection process with you.

6. a) In a step-by-step format, please describe your understanding of how the GWA client selection process is carried out from initial intake to programme completion.

[Interviewer: Take point form notes]

b) Where does your position fit into this process and what activities do you carry out?

I will now mention a number of criteria used in selecting clients for job training programmes.

7. A. For each criterion:

- Please describe how important you feel it would be in placing a client into a job training programme.

Your choices are: Very Important ——— Not At All Important

- Discuss what you feel are minimal standards for an individual to possess in order to meet "employable" status.

e.g., Minimum Education Level = Grade 12.

	Importance	Minimal Standards
a) Age		
b) Level of Education		
c) Level of Literacy		
d) Health Status		
e) Stability of Home Life		
f) Earning Capacity		
g) Most Recent Use of Skills in a Job		
h) Length of Previous Employment		
i) Work Behaviour		
j) Skill Level		
k) Type of Residence		
l) Appearance		
m) Legal Barriers		
n) Transportation		
o) Child Care Needs		

B. If you are/were assessing a client for eligibility in a job training programme, which of these (aforementioned) criteria would you most often use?

This section will discuss matching GWA clients with programmes.

8. a) Which factor(s) do you feel are most important in deciding to refer a GWA client to a specified programme?

b) At any point in the referral of a GWA client to (a job training) programme are the personal expectations of that client taken into consideration?

( ) Yes ( ) No

If so, how?

c) In your counselling sessions, do you routinely inform clients of programme expectations prior to or during participation in a job training programme?

( ) Yes ( ) No

9. a) In your interview sessions, what are the rights (e.g. to due process, to allowances and other benefits) and obligations (e.g. to keep appointments, to participate, etc.) discussed with GWA client?

b) In impressing upon clients their rights and obligations, do you generally refer to a more administrative process (i.e. paperwork, filling in forms or contracts) or use of verbal communications?

c) To what extent are these rights and obligations used on purpose to get across work-oriented expectations to clients?

d) In counselling, is some sort of obligatory employment plan developed? If so, how do you set it up?

10. In general, at what point or interval after programme referral do you know whether a specific client is employed, securing additional education or skills training, or is on GWA caseload as a returnee?

11. a) How important is it that a client referred to a specific programme is considered 'job ready'?

    b) What proportion, approximately, of your client caseload could be considered 'job ready' vs. 'unassigned status'?

This last set of questions will deal with your perception of the effectiveness of this/these programmes.

12. a) Do you believe that clients benefit in the long term from the specific programme(s) in which they are participating?

    ( ) Yes [Go to Question 15.b)]
    ( ) No [Go to Question 15.c)]

    b) In what way(s)?

    c) Why not? (be specific)

13. What factors do you feel contribute to the drop-out rate in job training programmes?

14. How might clients' expectations become better matched with those of the programme(s) into which they are referred?

15. a) Do you feel that this programme intervention is effective enough to overcome the obstacles that block the entry of the unemployed into the labour force?

( ) Yes ( ) No [Go to Question 18.b)]

b) What changes would you like to see in:

1) the referral process

2) programme structure

3) programme content

4) other (specify)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PROJECT.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 Profile of Sample

The key informant interview sample comprised a total of 30 purposively selected mangers, counsellors, Regional Social Services workers and curricular consultants/instructors from across the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

Counsellors (both program and referral) made up the largest sub-group with 12/30 (40.2%) respondents. Eight of thirty (26.6%) respondents were social services workers, 5/30 (16.6%) were managers (i.e., programs, C.E.I.C.'s, Income Maintenance) and 5/30 (16.6%) were curricular consultants or instructors (Table E-1).

Table E-2 shows a breakdown of the length of time spent in the respondents' current position. The largest single group, with 10/27 (37.0%) respondents had been at their current level for between one and two years. An additional 12/27 (44.5%) had been in their level or position for greater than or equal to three years, with the largest period of service being 25 years. Only 5/27 (18.5%) had been in their position for less than one year.

Table E-3 illustrates a wide range of academic or professional training for the sample of n=30 respondents. A majority of informants had at least a Bachelor's degree in a related field of study, with 16/30 (53.3%) holding a Bachelor's degree, 5/30 (16.6%) more than one Bachelor's degree, 5/30 (16.6%) a Master's degree and 1/30 (3.3%) completing a Ph.D.

2.2 Duties and Responsibilities

Client assessment and referral was carried out by 25/30 (83.3%) informants. Of these, 14/25 (46.7%) were routinely involved in personal counselling, 11/25 (44.0%) in referrals to other programs, 4/25 (44.0%) in client intake, 8/25 (32.0%) in formal assessment, 8/25 (32.0%) in job search counselling, 6/25 (24.0%) in life skills coaching and 5/25 (20.0%) in action planning (Table E-4).

2.3 Client/Program Match

Table E-5 provides an overview of criteria used most often by counsellors in assessing employment training program eligibility, as expressed by n=30 informants.

When asked to explain reasons why a counsellor might not refer a prospective client to a program, 8/25 (26.7%) stated a client's attitude was a major indicator of program refusal. Another 5/25 (16.7%) noted an 'unemployable' status as a determinant and 4/25 (13.3%) stated that factors such as different expectations, inadequate child care and changes pending were restrictive to program entry (Table E-6).

Legal barriers, with 16/30 (53.3%) respondents was the largest single criterion-based response frequency; however, level of education and availability of child care, with 15/30 (50.0%) respectively also represent a large percentage of responses. Age, literacy level and historical work behaviour, with 14/30 (46.7%) each were also cited as important criteria. To a lessor, but still significant extent, health status, level of motivation, previous employment period, availability of transportation, and the last time skills were used by the client were important determinants.

The greatest common barriers to employment, as expressed by n=30 key informants, were level of education, with 13/30 (43.3%) and attitude/motivation of the client, with 11/30 (36.7%) informants responding (Table E-7). Other common barriers included a poor work record, lack of information provided to the client through the existing system of referrals, inadequate transportation and illiteracy.

Table E-8 provides a short list of reasons why clients may tend to leave a given program before completion. A total of 6/30 (20.0%) noted personal motivation, 5/30 (16.6%) a client's personal situation, 5/30 (16.6%) a client's non-satisfaction with a program, and 4/30 said some clients feel the need to 'develop faster'. Other reasons included: if the client gets a job, if the client is transferred to another program, an inadequate training allowance, poor program attendance, and inadequate child care.

2.4 Perceived Benefits for Clients

Table E-9 indicates that 8/28 (28.6%) informants agreed that clients benefit from program involvement in terms of skills development, more direct route to job entry and improved levels of motivation. Another 6/28 (21.4%) stated clients improved their social skills, 5/28 (17.8%) noted self-confidence and life skills, and 1/28 (3.6%) noted a better knowledge of the job market and work expectations.

As Table E-10 indicates, the majority, or 16/23 (69.6%) informants who responded stated programs are an effective means to overcoming employment barriers within the Hamilton-Wentworth Region. Only 5/23 (21.7%) did not think programs were effective enough interventions.

3.0 Tables

TABLE E-1: PROFILE OF SAMPLE

	Frequency	%
Counsellors	12	40.2
Social Service Workers	8	26.6
Managers	5	16.6
Curricular Consultants/Instructors	5	16.6
Total	30	100.0

TABLE E-2: LENGTH OF TIME IN POSITION

	Frequency	%
≤1 Year	5	18.5
1 - 2 Years	10	37.0
3 - 4 Years	7	26.0
≥10 Years	5	18.5
Total	27	100.0

TABLE E-3: ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING (N=30)*

	Frequency	%
College Diploma	12	40.0
Bachelor's Degree	16	53.3
>Bachelor's Degree (i.e., more than one)	5	16.6
Master's Degree	4	13.3
Ph.D.	1	3.3
Total	38	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-4: CLIENT ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL (N=25)*

	Frequency	%
Personal Counselling	14	46.7
Referrals to Other Programs	11	44.0
Client Intake	11	44.0
Formal Assessment	8	32.0
Job Search Counselling	8	32.0
Life Skills Coaching	6	24.0
Action Planning	5	20.0
Total	63	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-5: CRITERIA MOST OFTEN USED IN ASSESSING ELIGIBILITY (N=30)*

	Frequency	%
Legal Barriers	16	53.3
Level of Education	15	50.0
Child Care	15	50.0
Age	14	46.7
Literacy Level	14	46.7
Work Behaviour	14	46.7
Health	11	36.7
Motivation/Interest	11	36.7
Length of Previous Employment	10	33.3
Transportation	9	30.0
Last Time Used Skills	9	30.0
Total	138	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-6: REASONS FOR NOT REFERRING (N=25)*

	Frequency	%
Client's Attitude	8	26.7
Unemployable	5	16.7
Differing Expectations	4	13.3
Lack of Child Care	4	13.3
Changes Pending	4	13.3
Total	27	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-7: MOST COMMON BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT (N=30)*

	Frequency	%
Education Level	13	43.3
Attitude/Motivation	11	36.7
Poor Work Record	7	23.3
Lack of System Support Via Information	6	20.0
Transportation	5	16.7
Illiteracy	5	16.7
Total	47	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-8: REASONS FOR LEAVING PROGRAMS (N=30)*

	Frequency	%
Motivation	6	20.0
Personal Problem (situational)	5	16.6
Not Satisfied with Program	5	16.6
Needed to Develop Faster	4	13.3
Get a Job	3	10.0
Transferred to Other Program	2	6.6
Inadequate Training Allowance	2	6.6
Poor Attendance	2	6.6
Child Care	2	6.6
Total	31	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-9: PERCEIVED BENEFITS FOR CLIENTS (N=28)*

	Frequency	%
Skills Development	8	28.6
More Direct Job Entry	8	28.6
Greater Self Motivation	8	28.6
Better Social Skills	6	21.4
Self Confidence	5	17.8
Improved Life Skills	5	17.8
Better Informed of Job Market	1	3.6
Realistic Knowledge of Work Expectations	1	3.6
Total	42	—

* Multiple responses permitted

TABLE E-10: PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE TO OVERCOME BARRIERS?

	Frequency	%
Yes	16	69.6
No	5	21.7
No Response	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0